

Unemployment aid requests fall to near 3-year low

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INSIDE TODAY

SPORTS NEWS

The Don



Lindsey Vonn, of the United States, celebrates at the finish area after winning an alpine ski, women's World Cup downhill race, in Are, Sweden, Saturday, Feb. 26, 2011.

See *Aruba Today Sports*

WORLD NEWS

Years after vanishing in Iran, U.S. man proven alive



In this undated photo provided by Christine Levinson, Robert Levinson is shown. The US has proof that ex-FBI agent Robert Levinson is alive, four years after vanishing in Iran.

Associated Press

Page 2

Royal Dutch Marines captured



Refugees that fled the unrest in Libya try to stay warm next to a fire near the Libyan border in Ras Ajdir, Tunisia, March 3, 2011. As an international airlift organized by European nations got underway on Thursday, the head of the United Nations refugee agency said it was proving a "logistical nightmare" to help tens of thousands of migrant workers fleeing Libya in a desperate crush on the Tunisian border.

(Nadia Shira Cohen/The New York Times)



Three Dutch Marines were surrounded by armed men and captured Sunday after landing near Sirte in a Lynx helicopter that was on board the navy ship HMS Tromp, which is anchored off the Libyan coast to help evacuations.

By MIKE CORDER
Associated Press

THE HAGUE, Netherlands — Armed forces loyal to Moammar Gadhafi captured three Dutch marines and their helicopter during a botched evacuation mission near a stronghold of the Libyan leader, the Defense Ministry said Thursday.

Libyan authorities are still holding the marines five days after they were seized Sunday by armed men after landing near Sirte in a Lynx helicopter from the navy ship HMS Tromp. The ship was anchored off the Libyan coast to help evacuations from the conflict-torn country, spokesman Otte Beeksma told The

Associated Press.

Two Europeans, one Dutch and one whose nationality was not released, were also captured. They were handed over unharmed to the Dutch embassy in Tripoli early Thursday and have left Libya, the ministry said.

Prime Minister Mark Rutte said his government authorized the mission.

Dutch officials are in "intensive negotiations" with Gadhafi's government to secure the marines' release, he said.

"We have also been in contact with the crewmen involved," Beeksma said. "They are doing well under the circumstances and we hope they will be released as quickly as possible."

Dutch state news cited the consulting firm Royal Haskoning as saying the Dutch man the captured soldiers had been trying to rescue is an engineer for their firm, but it did not give any information about the other. The compa-

ny could not immediately be reached for comment.

Defense Minister Hans Hillen welcomed the news that the two Europeans were safe and had left Libya. "Everything is being done to also get the crew safely out of the country as soon as possible," he said in a statement. □

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FBI

Continued from Front Page

By MATT APUZZ
ADAM GOLDMAN
Associated Press

WASHINGTON – Four years after a retired FBI agent mysteriously vanished inside Iran, U.S. officials have received irrefutable proof he is alive, a dramatic development that has sharply intensified diplomatic efforts to bring him home, The Associated Press has learned. The U.S. had lacked reliable information about whether Robert Levinson was alive or dead since he disappeared in March 2007 from the Iranian island of Kish. It remains unclear who exactly is holding Levinson or where he is, but the proof that he is alive is a hopeful sign in a case that had seemingly gone cold. The State Department issued a three-sentence statement by Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton Thursday saying there were indications Levinson was in southwest

Asia and asking Iran for help. The AP has learned fuller details after a lengthy investigation into Levinson's disappearance and the effort to get him back to the U.S. Iran has repeatedly said it has no information about Levinson, but U.S. diplomats and investigators have long said they believed he was taken by Iranian government agents. As years passed, many in the U.S. government believed the 63-year-old with diabetes and high blood pressure might have died. But late last year, Levinson's family received proof that he was alive. Investigators confirmed its authenticity and that it was recent, current and former officials said. Officials say they believe he is still alive. "It has been almost four years since I have seen my beloved husband Robert Levinson," his wife, Christine, said in a statement on the family's website. "Our family is tremendously encouraged by the news Bob is alive but remains concerned for his safety and well-being."

Reporters were turned away from Levinson's gated community in Coral Springs, Fla., after someone from his home told guards not to let journalists in. A neighbor, Luanne Wallace, said she'd been praying for the family. "I am just so excited. I hope it's true," Wallace said. The AP has known about the proof of life since shortly after it arrived but delayed reporting it because officials said any publicity would jeopardize the ability to get Levinson home. The AP is not disclosing the nature of the proof because officials believe that would hurt efforts to free him. The current and former officials who discussed the matter insisted on anonymity because the issue is so sensitive. Next Wednesday will mark the fourth anniversary of Levinson's disappearance. With proof that he is alive, the case becomes one of the longer international hostage situations involving U.S. citizens. No one has publicly



In this Dec. 22, 2007 file photo, Christine Levinson, right, the wife of missing former FBI agent Robert Levinson, and her son Daniel take part in news conference at the Swiss Embassy in Tehran. The US has proof that ex-FBI agent Robert Levinson is alive, four years after vanishing in Iran.

Associated Press

acknowledged holding him. "It's encouraging that we may have good news," Florida Sen. Bill Nelson said. "I'm praying that he can be reunited with his family." The U.S. announcement Thursday was an abrupt change in tone from what had been stalemated discussions. The U.S. has previously expressed deep frustration over what it said was Iran's lack of cooperation.

Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad has been circumspect about what his country knows about Levinson. In the course of a single interview, he has said he had no information, has offered to help and then has accused the FBI of withholding information about why Levinson was in Iran. Levinson retired from the FBI in 1998 and became a private investigator. □



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In Ohio

Union bill whizzing through Legislature

COLUMBUS, Ohio — While much of the nation's attention remains focused on a stalled proposal in Wisconsin to restrict collective bargaining rights for public workers, an Ohio measure that in some ways is tougher and broader is speeding toward reality.

A Senate panel and then the full chamber approved the Ohio measure Wednesday amid jeers from onlookers. The bill would restrict the collective bargaining rights of roughly 350,000 teachers, firefighters, police officers and other public employees, while Wisconsin's would affect about 175,000 workers and exempt police and firefighters. "For as far-reaching this thing is and how many lives it will affect, I can't believe how fast it moved," said Columbus Police Sgt. Shaun Laird, who wanted lawmakers to spend more time debating the changes.

Wisconsin's bill remains in



Full chamber approved the Ohio measure Wednesday amid jeers from onlookers.

limbo after Democrats high-tailed it for the Illinois border on the day the Senate was to adopt the bill. Their absence left the chamber one member short of the quorum needed for a vote. In contrast, the Ohio bill could go as early as next week to House committee hearings. Republicans hold a 59-40 majority in the House, where the measure is likely to

receive strong support.

Ohio Gov. John Kasich, a Republican like his Wisconsin counterpart, Scott Walker, praised the development. Both have pushed the collective bargaining bills as part of budget-balancing measures. "This is a major step forward in correcting the imbalance between taxpayers and the government unions that work

for them," Kasich said.

The differences and similarities between the two proposals are many and nuanced, especially because lawmakers continue to debate and insert or subtract individual proposals. But to critics, at least one thing is clear: Both bills are meant to weaken the role of the unions. "From the perspective of unions, both bills are punitive and would severely restrict what they have traditionally bargained over and what they have done as organizations," said Harley Shaiken, a professor at the University of California at Berkeley who specializes in labor issues.

The Ohio bill would ban strikes by public workers and establish penalties for those who do participate in walk-outs. State workers in Wisconsin are already prohibited from striking.

Unionized workers in Ohio could negotiate wages, hours and certain work conditions but not health care, sick time or pension benefits. The measure would do away with automatic pay raises, and base future wage increases on merit. Wisconsin's measure would forbid most government workers from collectively bargaining except over wage increases that aren't beyond the rate of inflation. □

In Oklahoma

Hundreds seek pup back from 'dead'



The dose should have been enough to kill the dog, and the second injection was meant to ensure it worked, but it survived.

OKLAHOMA CITY — Hundreds of people from the United States and Canada want to adopt an Oklahoma dog that survived an attempt to euthanize it.

The puppy was one of five stray dogs that Sulphur animal control officer Scott Prall

put to sleep Friday — or so he thought.

Prall found one of the dogs alive Saturday in a trash bin set aside for dead animals and took it to veterinarian technician Amanda Kloski. "He was prancing around. He heard me drive up, and he looked up and

saw me," Prall said Wednesday.

He said he initially found the stray dog near the animal shelter Friday and tried to kill it by injecting the dog with two lethal doses of a sedative in a foreleg and the heart. Each dose should have been enough to kill the dog, and the second injection was meant to ensure it worked.

Kloski noted the dog's survival on a pet adoption website, drawing the attention of Marcia Machtiger of Pittsburgh, who donated \$100 so Kloski could board the dog for a week. A girl from Sulphur named the puppy Wall-e, after a Disney movie character, and Machtiger posted Wall-e's story on her Facebook page.

She and Kloski are sorting through hundreds of e-mails and phone calls from people wanting to adopt the lucky dog. "So many people are interested," Kloski said. □

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In Florida Canal

Police have likely IDs on kids found

DELRAY BEACH, Fla. — Police said Thursday they think they have identified two children whose bodies were stuffed into luggage and dumped in a South Florida canal. Authorities believe the children a girl between 6 and 10 and a boy between 10 and 12 were siblings, but they have not released their names. They said they have made no arrests, though they could be seen Thursday afternoon searching a nearby house.

A police spokeswoman said authorities believe the children were the victims of some sort of domestic situation, but she declined to elaborate.

It is still not known how long the bodies were in the canal, and autopsy reports haven't been released.

The girl's body was found in a duffel bag Wednesday



Divers from three agencies used sonar and a remote-controlled submarine to scour the canal for clues Thursday.

morning. The boy's was discovered later in the day, folded into a suitcase about a half-mile away.

Divers from three agencies used sonar and a remote-controlled submarine to scour the canal for clues Thursday.

"They are trying to see if there is anything that is going to help us move further on

this," Delray Beach Police spokeswoman Nicole Guerriero said.

The wide canal flows east to west through this oceanside town southeast of West Palm Beach, stretching between U.S. 441 and the Intracoastal Waterway and passing beneath Florida's Turnpike and Interstate 95.

In Ohio, just like Wisconsin

Union plan draws protests

COLUMBUS, Ohio — More than 5,000 protesters converged on Ohio's state capital as state lawmakers considered a bill like one in Wisconsin to curtail collective bargaining rights for public workers and eliminate their right to strike.

Republican supporters of the Ohio proposal said the limits to public workers' ability to bargain are necessary to give local governments flexibility and help reduce the state's two-year budget deficit of about \$8 billion.

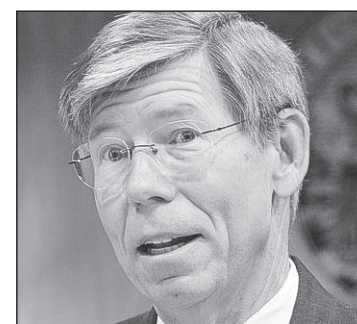
"Over time, these contracts have often incorporated demands that frankly belong to public employers rather than employees things like specifying the number of workers that should be assigned to a specific job," said Jason Mauk, a spokesman for Ohio State Senate Republicans.

He said the bill provides "some balance to the process." But labor unions and Democrats have protested that the bill goes too far in sacrificing public workers' rights.

One unemployed protester, Evan Goodenow, 46, from Bellevue, Ohio, said he was raised by a single mother who was a union meter maid. "She would be rolling over in her grave if she knew what was going on now."

"This isn't about deficits. This is about union-busting," he said.

The proposal will be considered by a Senate committee, and may be voted



Jason Mauk, a spokesman for Ohio State Senate Republicans.

on by the full Senate this week. Workers plan a protest rally on Wednesday as well.

The crowd was estimated at 5,000 outside and 300 inside the Capitol building, the largest protest in Ohio since the controversy began two weeks, said William Carleton, director of The Capitol Square Review and Advisory Board, which manages the Capitol facility.

The bill is expected to be modified from its original form, which would have prohibited collective bargaining for 42,000 state workers in addition to 19,500 workers in the state's university and college system. This would go even further than Wisconsin and end a right established in 1983 for Ohio's public-sector workers. For local governments that bargain with unions representing some 300,000 workers including police, firefighters, and public school teachers, the bill removes health care and some other benefits from the negotiating process.

Proposed change would restore collective bargaining power for public employees



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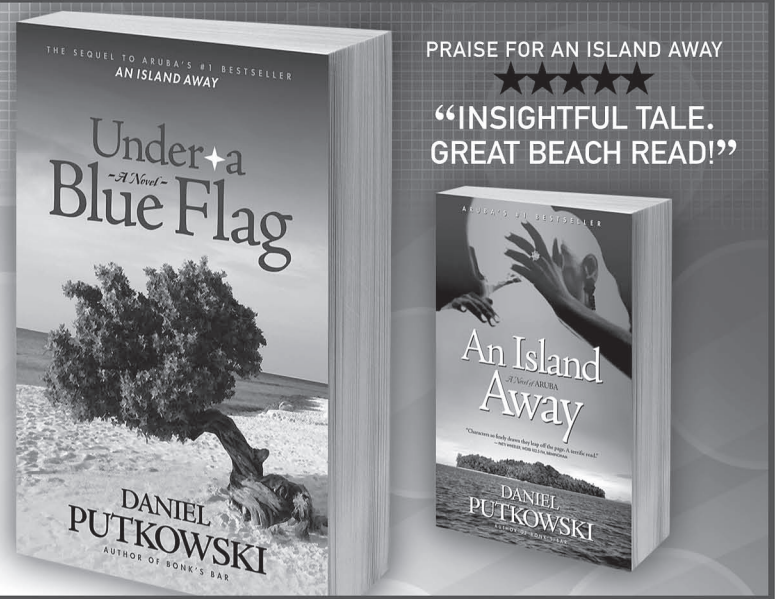


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Obama, Calderon pledge cooperation on drug wars



President Barack Obama and Mexican President Felipe Calderon.

WASHINGTON — Seeking to repair damaged relations, President Barack Obama and Mexican President Felipe Calderon agreed to deepen their cooperation in combating drug violence and declared a breakthrough in efforts to end a long-standing dispute over cross-border trucking. During a joint news conference at the White House, Obama praised Calderon for his “extraordinary courage” in

fighting the violent drug cartels that have been responsible for deaths on both sides of the border. Obama pledged to speed up U.S. aid to train and equip Mexican forces to help in those efforts, but he also acknowledged that the U.S. must stem the flow of cash and guns to Mexico that have aided the cartels. “We are very mindful that the battle President Calderon is fighting inside of

Mexico is not just his battle, it’s also ours,” Obama said. “We have to take responsibility just as he’s taken responsibility.”

Calderon’s visit comes three weeks after U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement agent Jaime Zapata was shot to death in northern Mexico with a gun smuggled in from the U.S. The incident raised questions in the U.S. about Mexico’s ability to control violence and has Obama administration officials considering arming U.S. agents working across the border to ensure their safety.

Mexican law bans foreign law enforcement agents working in the country from bearing arms, and Calderon vehemently expressed his opposition to making an exception for U.S. personnel. But he said Zapata’s death showed a need to consider alternative methods for protecting agents. □

In Indiana

Elections chief charged with fraud and perjury

INDIANAPOLIS — A prosecutor says a grand jury has indicted the Indiana’s top elections official on seven felony counts, including voter fraud and perjury.

Special prosecutor John Dowd said that Republican Secretary of State Charlie White faces three counts of voter fraud and two counts of perjury for listing his ex-wife’s home in Fishers when voting in the May primary instead of his actual address.

White also faces a theft charge for allegedly remaining on and collecting a salary from the Fishers town council after moving out of town. And he faces a financial fraud charge for allegedly lying under oath about his address on a home loan. □

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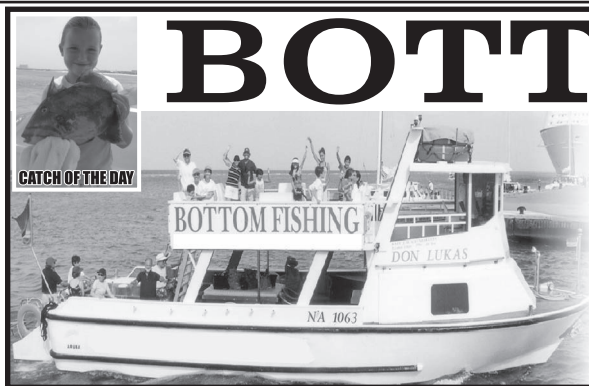
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At Northwestern University

Sex toy ed. to be investigated

CHICAGO — Northwestern University's president said that he is "troubled and disappointed" that a psychology professor allowed a couple to engage in a sex act involving a motorized sex toy in front of dozens of students, and he is calling for an investigation. Hours after accounts of the Feb. 21 class appeared in local newspapers including the university's defense of Professor John Michael Bailey's decision to allow students to witness the act Northwestern President Morton Schapiro strongly criticized the lecturer. "I feel it represented extremely poor judgment on the part of our faculty member," Schapiro said a statement issued by the Evanston university. A guest lecturer had been discussing bondage and sexual fetishes during Bailey's human sexuality class. According to published reports, a

couple at the lecture decided that a video the students were watching on the female orgasm was not realistic and gave a live presentation involving the sex toy. Schapiro said it did not matter that the incident occurred after the class was over, that attendance was voluntarily and that the students were warned of the explicit nature of what they were about to see. "I have recently learned of the after-class activity associated with Prof. Michael Bailey's Human Sexuality class, and I am troubled and disappointed by what occurred," he said. "I simply do not believe this was appropriate, necessary or in keeping with Northwestern University's academic mission," he said. Evanston police say it will be up to the school to determine if the demonstration violated any local ordinances. The guest lecturer

asked the students if they were "ready for a live sex show," student Justin Smith told the Chicago Tribune. At that point, Faith Kroll took off her clothes and she and Jim Marcus climbed on the stage and, as about 100 students looked on, the pair demonstrated the use of a motorized device with a phallic object attached to it. The lecturer, Ken Melvoin-Berg, told the newspaper that the students were told about issues such as safety and consent. "It is probably something I will remember the rest of my life," Smith, a 21-year-old senior, told the Tribune. "I can't say that about my Econ 202 class and the material that I learned there."The university will pay several hundred dollars to Melvoin-Berg, the co-owner of Weird Chicago Tours, for the lecture. □

In Wisconsin

Lawmakers talk but no deal on unions

MADISON, Wisconsin — Absent Senate Democrats in Wisconsin are in talks with the majority Republicans about possible compromises to end a stalemate over a bill to strip public sector unions of most bargaining rights. But two Democratic senators said negotiations with their Republican counterparts have yet to reach a point that would tempt the 14 Democrats to return.

They fled Wisconsin more than two weeks ago to deny the 19 Republican senators a quorum and to prevent a vote on the bill, which has triggered massive pro-union protests at the Capitol and a national debate on the power of unions.

Meanwhile, Republicans passed a resolution on Thursday that would compel the Democrats' attendance in Madison, and authorizes the missing senators be taken into custody if they are found in the state. Republicans have also agreed to levy a \$100-a-day fine on absent senators. Senate Majority Leader Scott Fitzgerald said the Republican majority had been reasonable but "they have pushed us to the edge of a constitutional crisis." The Democrats have met at



Senate Majority Leader Scott Fitzgerald.

least once a day at undisclosed locations in Illinois near the Wisconsin border to discuss "whether negotiations with senate Republicans have been at all productive, or maybe even fruitful," said senator Jim Holperin, who represents Eagle River in northern Wisconsin.

"When the Senate Republicans claim that there are eight or nine Democratic caucus members who would like to come home, that is probably accurate," Holperin said in an interview with Reuters. "But only under the right circumstances." Democrat Dave Hansen, in an interview with his hometown Green Bay Press-Gazette, said negotiations are focused on preserving some union bargaining rights that might be inserted into a subsequent bill or in revisions to a budget proposal. □



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LOCAL Aruba TODAY

Smiling face Leidiany de Araujo a recognized leader



ORANJESTAD - When you come to CILO City Lounge in the Renaissance Marketplace you will instantly recognize Leidiany de Araujo, whose smile is always lighting up the place. The Brazilian-born waitress was honored as the Mise en Place Employee of the Month for her energetic performance, service-minded personality and great spirit. Colleagues as well as frequent guests greatly appreciate Leidiany, who has worked at CILO since May 2010. Leidiany received her certificate out of the hands of Operations Manager of Mise en Place, Kim d'Hont, and CILO manager Mijke Dijkers. The honoree also received a gift certificate for a dinner for two at any of Mise en Place's restaurants.

CILO City Lounge forms part of the Mise en Place family, together with Taste of Belgium's Bistro in the Paseo Herencia Mall and theme-based Papillon Restaurant in The Village, across from the Radisson Resort. Mise en Place is the umbrella company that oversees all goings-on. And speaking of goings-on: at CILO there is a lot to look forward to. □

4 decades of serving the island of Aruba

American Airlines celebrates 40 years



American Airlines staff from Aruba is pictured in the VIP Room at Aruba's Queen Beatrix Airport yesterday morning during a press conference.

Photos by Julia Renfro

ORANJESTAD - Yesterday, a small gathering was held in the VIP Room of the Queen Beatrix Airport where press members and VIP's met with the honorable Aruban staff of American Airlines.

The guests received tokens of appreciation and enjoyed cake in honor of serving the island of Aruba for 40 years.

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tally responsible operation for its employees and customers. Our annual Environmental Responsibility Report (ERR) provides a chance to evaluate not only how well we are doing as an environmentally conscious organization, but also share these findings with our many stakeholders. Although the U.S. Aviation industry as a whole is consuming less fuel than it did in the year 2000, American has committed to



building on this progress and following an aggressive plan to improve fuel efficiency by 20 percent by 2020. American, along with the other

airlines belonging to the Air Transport Association, has set an even more ambitious goal of reducing fuel consumption by 30 percent by 2025. □

Westin crowns its Carnival Queen



PALM BEACH - Associates at the Westin Resort & Casino, Aruba are in the Carnival spirit, and during a recent event, crowned their own queen from among several associate contestants.

Amidst live music-even a traditional brass band kicked off the event-the contestants jumped and danced through original presentations and fun costumes to the applause of their colleagues.

At the end of the event, the following were the winners: Carnival Queen--Natouska Solognier, 1st runner up--Katuizka Sambo, 2nd runner up-- Sonia Bryson, best costume--Dolores Holsman, best show-- Natouska Solognier, best speech--Sonia Bryson. Congratulations to all! □



Tony Roma's is the island's headquarters for ribs!

Many restaurants claim to have the best ribs in the land, but only Tony Roma's world famous ribs continue to rack up taste awards from a variety of cities, regions, and countries across the globe. Tony Roma's Palm Beach brings this classic to Aruba.

Great ribs put Tony Roma's on the map, but the menu also features an array of flame-grilled favorites including steaks, seafood and chicken. The menu also serves up fresh salads, fantastic burgers and sandwiches, grilled fresh local fish, mouthwatering desserts and delicious appetizers - especially the popular, made-from-scratch Onion Loaf.

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Naturally, the restaurant's whole Grilled Red Snapper, fresh fish fillets and beef tenderloins are all cooked "A la Plancha," with just a sprinkle of olive oil, representing a healthy Mediterranean lifestyle. Patrons also favor the restaurant irresistible thin-crust pizza, baked according to a secret family recipe, topped with Casa Tua infused spicy olive oil, a signature condiment for Casa Tua restaurants on the Island.

To complete this Spanish experience and make it truly unforgettable, Angela Croes, the local Song-Diva,



a native of Spain, a golden recording artist, will perform all Wednesdays and Fridays from 8pm with her daughter and Spanish-Aruban guitar talents.

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ORANJESTAD - What a surprise!!! This old warehouse transformed into a typical Spanish or Italian town's square, with its gurgling fountain, French lamp-post and lime-washed walls features an open Pizza Atelier, under a small country hut, covered with old hand-made roof tiles. Opened downtown Oranjestad two years ago, the restaurant dishes reflect this inter-cultural relationship of Spanish, French and

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Of the East Tower

Acqua Condominium Aruba nears completion



PALM BEACH – Acqua Condominium Aruba, a project spearheaded by well-established local realtors, Homenet Real Estate, announced this week that construction has been progressing at a brisk pace, as three more floors have been poured in the past five weeks, since builders returned from their well-deserved Christmas holidays. The East Tower, overlooking Palm Beach boasts 208 condos, spread over 14 floors.

The two top building floors embrace 16 penthouse apartments with majestic views. The building in its entirety is scheduled to conclude construction at the end of this year. Then following the completion of the elegant clubhouse, the tropical landscaped pool and the spacious parking lots in April of 2011, condos will be delivered to their proud new owners.

A spokesperson for Homenet Real Estate reports that the

project enjoys much attention this Winter season, and is visited regularly by snow-birds longing to make their dream of a vacation-home on the island, come true.

Making the decision on a purchase, and acting on it fast, was recently made even more imperative. In November of 2010, the island government of Aruba reiterated its commitment to a building moratorium for the next 10 years, making Acqua Condominium

a truly unique investment opportunity, as it is the one and only high-rise condo project, on property land, in the island's most-desired location. In view of the moratorium news, and the project's lucrative position, developers were impelled to call the pre-construction discounts off. Nevertheless other purchase incentives were introduced, such as a time-share trade in. A number of time-share projects may be traded in, the spokesperson

explains, with certain restrictions. Also a profitable deal is available to buyers in which they may place their unit in a rental pool with a guaranteed 6-months income, for the first year.

If the image of Aqua Condominium tugs at your heartstrings, you are invited to visit the sales gallery and the two elegant model-suites available for viewing, fully finished with luxurious touches and high-end amenities. □

Island Guests coming back for more at Fishes & More



PALM BEACH - Pictured are guests from the USA enjoying an evening at Fishes & More. Pictured are Richard and Dolores Rause from Pennsylvania and at the other table, the Mc Tighe and Guggenheim families from New York. Fishes & More specializes in fresh fish and seafood, and at the same time pleases the non-fish lovers as well. All the dishes are prepared a la minute by an internationally experienced kitchen team, which gives the twist to our dishes. Influences from all over the world are found back on the menu and they are already well known for their daily changing specials. Ideally located in front of the Occidental Resort (Former Allegro), they are visited both by individuals and families alike, as they highlight a kids menu also. □



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Arab League says

Chavez Lybia- plan only under review

CAIRO – Arab League chief Amr Moussa said a plan proposed by Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez to resolve the crisis in Libya was merely “under consideration” and it was up to Venezuela to release details. The online edition of Libya’s Yosberides newspaper, formerly known as Quryna, reported earlier that Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi had agreed to the proposal floated by his ally Chavez.

“It is a Venezuelan proposal and sent to us and we are considering it and that is all,” Moussa told Reuters after meeting Turkish President Abdullah Gul, who was on a trip to Cairo where the Arab League is based.

Asked about the substance of the plan, Moussa said: “Venezuela can speak for herself. It is just under consideration, not a single step beyond that.”

He did not make any further comments about the plan, but earlier had told Reuters that he was in no position to know whether Gaddafi accepted it. □



Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez

In Yemen

Opposition suggests way out of crisis

SANAA, Yemen – A coalition of Yemeni opposition groups has proposed a plan to end the country’s political crisis that would involve embattled President Ali Abdullah Saleh stepping down by the end of the year, a spokesman for the group said.

Mohammed al-Sabri said the opposition sent Saleh the five-point plan, which presents an outline for a peaceful transition of power, through religious scholars on Wednesday. He said the opposition is waiting for a response.

Yemen has been rocked for weeks by daily protests inspired by the uprisings in Egypt and Tunisia against Saleh’s government. Tens of thousands protested in several cities including the capital Sanaa, Aden and the central city of Bayda. Security officials said four protesters were wounded in Bayda when government supporters opened fire at their opponents.



The opposition sent the five-point plan, which presents an outline for a peaceful transition of power, through religious scholars on Wednesday.

Saleh, a key ally in the U.S. campaign against the al-Qaida terror network, has promised to step down after national elections in 2013, an offer rejected by protesters.

The opposition plan does not detail how Saleh, who has been in power 32 years, would hand over power, but al-Sabri said the opposition expects the president to come forward with his own proposal.

“The opposition’s vision is

that Saleh moves according to a roadmap that begins with a key solution or a program for his departure,” al-Sabri said. He added that the program should “be clear and frank and should not extend beyond the end of the current year.”

Al-Sabri said the opposition’s plan also calls for an investigation into the deaths of demonstrators and for guarantees of Yemenis’ right to protest peacefully. □

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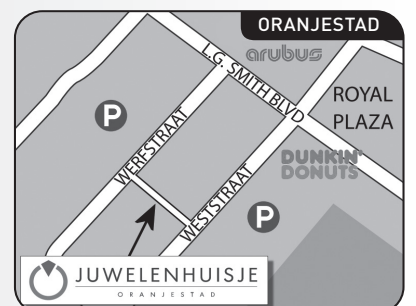
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Did 'financial terrorism' cause the 2008 economic crash?

New York — A government report suggests that “outside forces” may have triggered the 2008 economic meltdown. So it wasn’t our fault after all? It turns out that the devastating 2008 financial collapse wasn’t caused by our over-leveraged borrowing and ballooning real estate prices, but rather “financial terrorism” from “outside sources,” at least according to a newly uncovered 2009 report commissioned by the U.S. Defense Department. Financial analyst Kevin Freeman, the Pentagon contractor who wrote the report, claims that coordinated financial attacks on the U.S. from unknown “financial enemies” turned a normal downturn into an economic catastrophe that drained \$50 trillion from the global economy. Could that really be true?

Yes, and we still face an economic 9/11: The financial attacks we’ve suffered are “the equivalent of box cutters on an airplane,” Freeman tells *The Washington Times*. But the likely perpetrators, “radical jihadists and the Chinese,” aren’t finished yet. A massive, dollar-destroying sell-off of U.S. government bonds “is the ‘end game’ if the goal is to destroy America,” and our nation remains woefully unprepared.



“Financial terrorism suspected in 2008 economic crash”

The “takeaway” from Freeman’s “ridiculous and wrong-headed, totally misguided, frequently factually incorrect” report is that being bearish “makes you a ‘full-fledged terrorist,’” says Kevin Depew at Minyanville. Well, betting that “completely insolvent” banks are, in fact, broke isn’t a crime. And China asking us to repay the trillions we borrowed would hardly destroy America, but it “could get this raise the cost of borrowing money!”

“How being bearish will make you a terrorist”

Don’t assume this happened just because it’s “possible”: Freeman’s theory doesn’t quite “hold water,” says Ed Morrissey in *Hot Air*. I can see how economic sabotage looked like an imminent threat in June 2009, when he issued the report, but his suspects China, Russia, Iran either couldn’t or wouldn’t want to carry out the attack he envisions. □

Claims of plagiarism take down Germany’s darling defense minister

Few political careers have been launched with such fury and gained so much traction in such a short span of time as that of Karl-Theodor zu Guttenberg. In just two years, the 39-year-old aristocrat, who is married to an heir of Otto von Bismarck, rose from a virtual unknown to Germany’s defense minister and most popular politician, loved for his honesty, honor and conservative values. It’s a fittingly extraordinary twist, then, that Guttenberg’s rising star has been extinguished as the result of a scandal surrounding not sex or money or some other typical form of political corruption, but plagiarism. Accused of having stolen large parts of his doctoral dissertation in what has become known as the Copy, Paste Affair, Guttenberg announced his resignation as minister on Tuesday, leaving his political future uncertain and the ruling Christian Democratic Union (CDU) devastated.

Guttenberg had all the conservative bonafides needed to restore faith among the CDU’s core voters, many of whom have become disenchanted with the way Chancellor Angela Merkel has moved the party to the left and alienated several of the party’s most tal-



ented leaders. He had become so popular - for months leading a monthly ranking of German politicians - that he was being touted as chancellor material, a potential successor to Merkel. “Guttenberg was a young, political star who appealed especially to ordinary German voters,” Gerd Langguth, political scientist and Merkel biographer, tells *TIME*. Which is why Guttenberg’s resignation is not only a personal setback; he also leaves Germany’s Christian Democrats weakened ahead of three important state elections later this month. But despite the shock of Guttenberg’s exist, the Berlin political machine grinds on. On Wednesday, it was announced that Interior Minister Thomas de Maiziere would replace Guttenberg at the defense

ministry. De Maiziere, a trusted Merkel ally, was interior minister in Saxony in eastern Germany until the Chancellor recruited him for her government. From 2005 to 2009, De Maiziere served first as Minister for Special Assignments and then as Merkel’s Chief of Staff. Bookish and lawyerly, he could hardly be a greater contrast to his flamboyant predecessor.

He is also competent and reliable, so makes an obvious choice for the next defense minister. But his move is a little surprising because De Maiziere comes from Merkel’s CDU, and according to the etiquette of German coalition politics, CDU partner the Christian Social Union, of which Guttenberg is a member, should have had the right to name a successor from their own ranks. “The choice of De Maiziere shows that the CSU is running out of qualified personnel,” says Langguth. Merkel moved swiftly to fill the gap left by Guttenberg and head off any protracted debate about whether she is decisive enough. Losing Guttenberg will hit the party hard. In Hamburg last month, Merkel’s CDU was swept from power by the resurgent Social Democrats. □

Tiananmen 2.0? Freedom is coming to China one way or another

Washington — For the second time in just over two decades, China’s Communist leaders watch anxiously as a series of popular revolutions in another critical area of the world sweep out entrenched dictators and threaten to reverberate in the People’s Republic. In the late 1980s and early 1990s, it was fellow Communist regimes in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union that toppled under people power. Now it is Arab and Persian tyrants who face the wrath of the people they have oppressed for generations. Events have seemed to reach the critical tipping-point when the regime fear of the people exceeds the people fear of the

regime.

Chinese bloggers have been quick to raise the obvious question could it happen in China? and to begin testing the waters. Internet postings have called for silent protests in several Chinese cities to emulate Tunisia’s “jasmine revolution.” They have spawned a few sporadic gatherings that the authorities quickly snuffed out before they could grow but it was a surprisingly early indication that the spark of hope for freedom in China is not extinguished. Libya’s violent and indiscriminate crackdown against the protesters posed a dilemma for Beijing because it endangered thousands of



Chinese working there. Compelled to defend its own citizens against mistreatment by a foreign government, China for the first time openly criticized a Mideast dictator’s repression of its people.

Dangerous inspirationBut Muammar Qaddafi’s brutal actions evoke an image the Chinese government would prefer forgotten its own crushing of the peaceful protest of students and work-

ers on Tiananmen Square in 1989. After Tunisia and Egypt, a collapse of the Libyan regime despite its bloody response could provide Chinese citizens with even more dangerous inspiration.

With Chinese workers now out of harm’s way in Libya, Beijing may have reason to hope the Tripoli regime survives the popular revolt. Though Beijing did vote to suspend Libya from the UN Human rights council, China would only agree to a Security Council resolution that did not authorize the use of force against Libya, and it has not joined the US and other governments in calling for Qaddafi to resign. □

In Tunisia

Pressure relieved as refugee airlift kicks in

RAS JDIR, Tunisia – An organized international airlift relieved the high pressure human flood from Libya into Tunisia as word spread to thousands of stranded refugees that planes were taking them home. After three days of chaos and a moment of panic when troops fired into the air to control crowds, a sense of order and calm was established at the Ras Jdir border crossing. Egyptian migrant laborers, many working illegally in Libya, were being bussed from a U.N. relief agency transit camp near the frontier to Djerba airport where some 40 evacuation flights were due to fly them out to Cairo during the day. Signaling that

international help was finally being mobilized, European Union humanitarian crisis chief Kristalina Georgieva visited the border area. “The European Union is doing everything we can to pressure (Libyan leader Muammar) Gaddafi to let people go and to stop torturing his people,” said Georgieva, the most senior international official to come to the crisis zone.

At Djerba airport, long queues built up outside the terminal building and the check-in desks were packed. France was providing six flights every day for the next days, said the French ambassador to Tunisia, Boris Boillon. British charters have also begun



After three days of chaos and a moment of panic when troops fired into the air to control crowds, a sense of order and calm was established.

a shuttle to Egypt. “The total number of people who have crossed so far, from February 20 to today, is from 90,000 to 95,000,” said Firas Kayal of

the UNHCR. “Yesterday alone there were 9,000 with Bangladeshis the majority.” Egyptian authorities said 43,000 of their nationals had crossed

and 30,000 had already been taken home, Kayal added. In Egypt, officials said dozens of flights were being organized to bring stranded Egyptians home from Libya and Tunisia, as well as from Malta, where some had escaped by sea. “We got requests from France, Britain, Spain, and a number of Egyptian businessmen to organize flights to transport Egyptians to Egypt,” said Sameh el-Hanafy, president of the Egyptian Civil Aviation Authority. At the border, several hundred Vietnamese workers from a construction company waited quietly inside the border compound for their transport, which duly arrived and bore them away. □

After minister slain

Pakistan vows to battle extremism



The assassination of Minister for Minorities Shahbaz Bhatti in broad daylight on Wednesday has cause great uproar.

ISLAMABAD – Pakistan must not buckle to extremism, President Asif Ali Zardari said a day after Taliban militants killed his government’s only Christian minister for challenging a law on blasphemy toward Islam. The assassination of Minister for Minorities Shahbaz Bhatti in broad daylight on Wednesday threatens to further destabilize the nuclear-armed U.S. ally where many fear a strain of violent religious conservatism is becoming more mainstream in society.

Zardari, head of a government many Pakistanis hold in little regard, said Bhatti’s killing was the result of a “negative mindset and intolerance” that had led to the killing of a provincial governor in January. Punjab governor Salman Taseer was also shot dead, by his own bodyguard, for his staunch opposition to the blasphemy law that mandates the death sentence for anyone insulting Islam. “We have to fight this mindset and defeat them. We will not be intimidated nor will we retreat,” the official AP news agency quoted Zardari as saying. “Such acts will not deter the government from eliminating extremism and terrorism,” he said. “Shahbaz fell victim to the negative mindset and intolerance that also took the lives of Benazir Bhutto and Punjab Governor Salman Taseer.” □



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In Canada

Alberta ranked as world's top mining jurisdiction

TORONTO – Canadian provinces still dominate a list of the world's most attractive mining jurisdictions, with Alberta claiming the top spot, according to a Fraser Institute survey released.

The survey, based on views of about 500 mining companies, measures the attractiveness of the mining policies implemented by governments across the globe.

Though a surge in metal prices has made miners more optimistic, many respondents said a growing trend of resource nationalism and new mining taxes are a cause for concern.

"I think for virtually every jurisdiction there is a feeling that things are getting worse, as opposed to better," said Fred McMahon, co-author of the report.

The Fraser Institute released

the report just ahead of the annual PDAC prospectors and developers convention in Toronto.

Higher taxes and new laws in some of the world's most investor-friendly destinations such as Quebec, Nevada, Chile and Australia have weighed on the rankings of these locations, McMahon said.

Miners saw the Canadian provinces of Alberta, Nevada and Saskatchewan as jurisdictions with the most appealing mining policies, but Quebec and Manitoba also made it into the top 10.

"Alberta is at the top by default; other recent top contenders all have some minor black mark against them," said McMahon. "Alberta has some mining, but it is not the world's richest mining territory."



Quebec, which ranked as the most mining friendly jurisdiction for the last three years fell out of favor last year when it announced tax increases and plans to rewrite its mining laws.

The survey includes data on 79 jurisdictions, including sub-national jurisdictions in Canada, the United States and Australia. This year it added Bulgaria, Greenland, Guinea-Conakry, Madagascar, Niger,

Romania and Vietnam.

Miners found Honduras the least favorable mining jurisdiction, with Venezuela and the Democratic Republic of Congo ranking only slightly higher. Others near the bottom of the list include Bolivia, India and Guatemala.

The world's largest copper producer Chile, which also made it into the top ten, was by far the highest ranked jurisdiction in Latin America. Botswana took the top African slot, ranking higher than gold mining hot spots like Burkina Faso and Mali.

"There's one shining light in Africa and that's Botswana," said McMahon. "The other countries bounce around, but their overall average is about the same." □

In Germany

Suspect admits targeting American troops

FRANKFURT, Germany – The suspect in the slaying of two U.S. airmen at Frankfurt airport has confessed to targeting American military members, a German security official said as investigators probed what they considered a possible act of Islamic terrorism.

German federal prosecutors took over the investigation into Wednesday's shooting, which also injured two U.S. airmen, one of them critically. They are working together with U.S. authorities, who said the suspect was not on any American watch list. Hesse state Interior Minister Boris Rhein told reporters in Wiesbaden that the suspect, identified as a 21-year-old ethnic Albanian from Kosovo, was apparently radicalized over the last few weeks.

Relatives in northern Kosovo identified him as Arid Uka, whose family has been living in Germany for 40 years. He lived in a 12-story apartment building in the working-class suburb of Sossenheim the same building where a man with links to the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan, Rami M., also lived, said an official, speaking on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to talk with the press about the matter. Rami M., whose last name has not been released, was picked up in Pakistan last year and extradited to Germany, where he faces charges of membership in a terrorist organization. It was not clear how much contact the two had. Rami M. left Germany in 2009 for

Pakistan but neighbors said they had both known one another. The suspect opened fire on a U.S. Air Force bus carrying 15 airmen based in the Lakenheath airfield in eastern England from Frankfurt to Ramstein Air Base, the Air Force said. From there, the airmen were to deploy to Afghanistan. Uka's family said he worked at Frankfurt airport and was a devout Muslim. He was taken into custody immediately after the shooting and was later brought before a federal judge in Karlsruhe, accused of killing two U.S. military personnel and seriously injuring two others. German federal prosecutors said in a statement "there is a suspicion that the act was motivated by Islamism."



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In Libya

Gaddafi bombs oil areas,
faces ICC crimes probe

AL-UQAYLA, Libya – Muammar Gaddafi struck at rebel control of a key Libyan coastal road for a second day but received a warning he would be held to account at The Hague for suspected crimes by his security forces. Venezuela said Gaddafi had agreed to its proposal for an international commission to negotiate an end to the turmoil in the world's 12th largest oil exporting nation.

But a leader of the uprising against Gaddafi's 41-year-old rule rejected any proposal for talks with the veteran leader.

In Paris, French Foreign Minister Alain Juppe said France and Britain would support the idea of setting up a no-fly zone over Libya if Gaddafi's forces continued to attack civilians.

The uprising, the bloodiest yet against long-serving rulers in the Middle East and North Africa, has torn through the OPEC-member country and knocked out nearly 50 percent of its 1.6 million barrels per day output, the bedrock of Libya's economy. In Libya's east, the site of a struggle for control of a strategically vital Mediterranean coastal road and oil industry facilities, witnesses said a warplane for a second day bombed the oil terminal town Brega, 500 miles east of Tripoli.

Warplanes also launched two raids against the nearby rebel-held town of Ajbadiya, witnesses said.

Gaddafi's son, Saif al-Islam, said the bombing of Brega was intended to scare off militia fighters and gain control of oil installations.

"First of all the bombs were just to frighten them to go away," he told Britain's Sky News. "Not to frighten them."



Muammar Gaddafi was warned he would be held to account at The Hague for suspected crimes by his security forces.

But on the ground, events appeared to turn against Gaddafi, as rebels spearheading the unprecedented popular revolt pushed their frontline against government loyalists west of Brega, where they had repulsed an attack a day earlier.

The opposition fighters said troops loyal to Gaddafi had been driven back to Ras Lanuf, home to another major oil terminal and 375 miles east of Tripoli. They also said they had captured a group of mercenaries.

In an angry scene at al-Uqayla, east of Ras Lanuf, a rebel shouted inches from the face of a cap-

tured young African and alleged mercenary: "You were carrying guns, yes or no? You were with Gaddafi's brigades yes or no?" The silent youth was shoved onto his knees into the dirt. A man held a pistol close to the boy's face before a reporter protested and told the man that the rebels were not judges.

In The Hague, International Criminal Court prosecutor Luis Moreno-Ocampo said Gaddafi and members of his inner circle, including some of his sons, could be investigated for alleged crimes committed since the uprising broke out in mid-February. □

Royal Mint produces
royal wedding coin

LONDON – Britain's Royal Mint has produced an official coin to commemorate next month's wedding of Prince William to Kate Middleton.

The 5 pound coin which will cost collectors 9.99 pounds to purchase and features an image of the couple in profile has been approved by William, Queen Elizabeth and the government.

The Royal Mint said the coin, designed by Mark Richards, a Fellow at the Royal Society of British Sculptors, was due to become legal tender on March 16.

"Public interest in this great event is already huge and building every day, so we are anticipating massive demand for these official commemorative coins," the Royal Mint said on its website.

Last December, the Royal Mint produced its first ever royal engagement coin to mark the couple's marriage announcement, but it was met with criticism and derision from royal watchers who said the depiction of Middleton bore little resemblance to her. □



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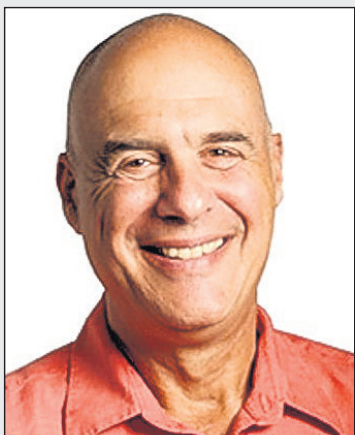
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Don't end agricultural subsidies, just fix them

By MARK BITTMAN

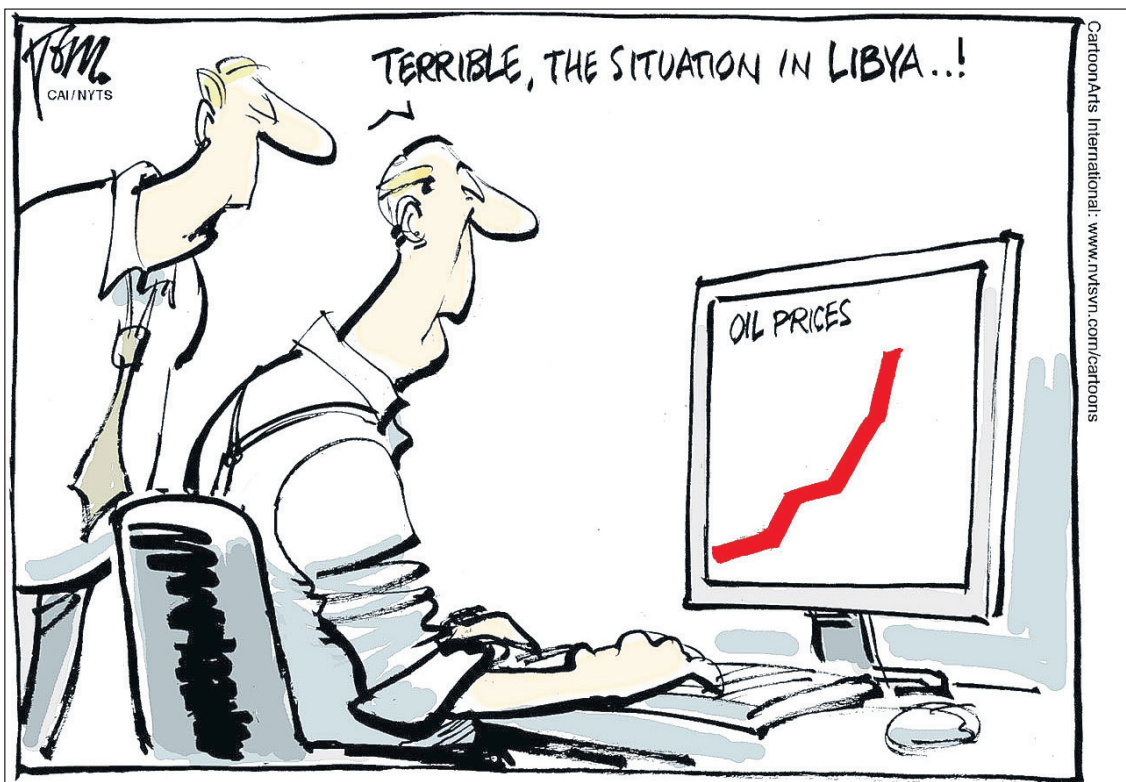
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Agricultural subsidies have helped bring us high-fructose corn syrup, factory farming, fast food, a two-soda-a-day habit and its accompanying obesity, the near-demise of family farms, monoculture and a host of other ills. Yet — like so many government programs — what subsidies need is not the ax but reform that moves them forward.



Mark Bittman

Imagine support designed to encourage a resurgence of small- and medium-size farms producing not corn syrup and animal-feed but food we can actually touch, see, buy and eat — like apples and carrots — while diminishing handouts to agribusiness and its political cronies. Farm subsidies were created in an attempt to ameliorate the effects of the Great Depression, which makes it ironic that in an era when more Americans are suffering financially than at any time since, these subsidies are mostly going to those who need them least. That wasn't the plan, of course. In the 1930s, prices were fixed on a variety of commodities, and some farmers were paid to reduce their crop yields. The program was supported by a tax on processors of food — now there's a precedent! — and was intended to be temporary. It worked, sort of: Prices rose and more farmers survived. But land became concentrated in the hands of fewer farmers, and agribusiness was born, and along with it the sad joke that the government paid farmers for not growing crops. The farm bill, up for renewal in 2012, includes an agricultural subsidy portion worth up to \$30 billion, \$5 billion of which is what you might call handouts, or direct payments to farmers. The subsidy-suckers don't grow the fresh fruits and vegetables that should be dominating our diet. Indeed, if all Americans decided to actually eat the five servings a day of fruits and vegetables that are recommended, they would discover that American agriculture isn't set up to meet that need. They grow what they're paid to grow: corn, soy, wheat, cotton and rice. The first two of these are the pillars for the typical American diet — featuring an unnaturally large consumption of meat, never-before-seen junk food and a bizarre avoidance of plants — as well as the fortunes of Pepsi, Dunkin' Donuts, KFC and the others that have relied on cheap corn and soy to build their empires of unhealthful food. Over the years, prices of fresh produce have risen, while those of meat, poultry, sweets, fats and oils, and especially soda, have fallen. (Tom Philpott, writing in the environment and food website Grist and citing a Tufts University study, reckons that between 1997 and 2005 subsidies saved chicken, pork, beef and high-fructose corn syrup producers roughly \$26.5 billion. In the short term, that saved consumers money, too. Prices for these foods are unjustifiably low — but at what cost to the environment, our food choices and our health?) Eliminating the \$5 billion in direct agricultural payments would level the playing field for farmers who grow unsubsidized crops, but just a bit — perhaps not even noticeably. There would probably be a decrease in the amount of high-fructose corn syrup in the market, in the 10 billion animals we “process” annually, in the ethanol used to fill gas-guzzlers and in the soy from which we chemically extract oil for frying potatoes and chicken. It would also eliminate a system that is clearly a joke: Wealthy growers are paid even in good years and may receive drought aid when there's no drought. □



Cartoonists International: www.nyts.com/cartoons

What we can do to tackle Libya

NICHOLAS D. KRISTOF

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In 1986, Moammar Gadhafi gave an interview to a group of female foreign journalists. Then he invited them, one by one, into a room furnished with just a bed and television and propositioned them.

They rebuffed him, and after three successive rejections he got the message and gave up. But the incident reflects something important about Gadhafi that is worth remembering today: He's nuts. The Libyan “king of kings” blends delusion, menace, pomposity, a penchant for risk-taking — and possession of tons of mustard gas. That's why it's crucial that world powers, working with neighboring countries like Egypt and Tunisia, steadily increase the pressure while Gadhafi is wobbling so that he leaves the scene as swiftly as possible. Unfortunately, Gadhafi has gained a bit of ground in the last few days, at least in the capital of Tripoli. He has used mercenaries to terrorize people and even drag injured protesters out of hospitals, so a sullen calm has returned to Tripoli for now.

Is there anything that America and other countries can do? Yes, absolutely. But, first, a word about what we can't do. It would be counterproductive for American and European troops to land on Libyan soil or to start bombing runs because



Nicholas D. Kristof

that would play into Gadhafi's narrative about imperialists trying to seize his country. The truth is that after Iraq, we just don't have a realistic option of invading another Arab country with oil. But what we can do is continue to squeeze Gadhafi, show resolve and make it clear that his departure is only a matter of time. That resolve won't change Gadhafi's mind, but it can peel off more of the Libyan military. And some of those military officers already are wavering. On Saturday, when I was in Egypt and it looked as if the Gadhafi government might collapse at any time, I had a call from Tripoli: A senior Libyan military officer who had been ordered to attack rebel-held towns was defecting to the rebels instead. The officer wanted me to report his defection — along with his call for other military officers to do the same — and he had already recorded a video of

his defection that I could post immediately on the New York Times website.

I was delighted but asked what preparations he had made to protect his family from retribution. None, it turned out. I urged the officer to hide his family, to ensure that his wife and children weren't kidnapped or killed in retaliation. A bit later, I heard back that the officer would accept the risk to his family.

I suggested that the officer think this through carefully one more time — and this time the officer actually consulted his wife, who was displeased. The officer sheepishly postponed the announcement of his defection temporarily. In the days since then, with Gadhafi having gained ground in Tripoli, the defection no longer seems to be on the table.

My sense is that many Libyan military officers are a bit like that one. They're uncomfortable attacking fellow Libyans, but they're also fearful that they or their families will be killed if they refuse. If the outside world signals resolutely that Gadhafi's ouster is only a matter of time, there's much more chance that officers will find ways to avoid going down with their leader.

The dispatch of American naval vessels to the sea off Libya is a useful step to show resolve. So are sanctions. □

Afridi spins Pakistan to victory

Canada's Balaji Rao, on the ground celebrates after completing a catch to dismiss Pakistan's Wahab Riaz, unseen, with captain Ashish Bagai during the ICC Cricket World Cup match between Canada and Pakistan in Colombo, Sri Lanka, Thursday, March 3, 2011.

Associated Press

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SPORTS Aruba TODAY

On Top Of The News E-mail:news@arubatoday.com Website:www.arubatoday.com Tel:582-7800 Friday, March 4, 2011



Michael Weiner, head of the Major League Baseball Players Association, talks to reporters after speaking to New York Yankees players before a baseball spring training game against the Philadelphia Phillies Saturday, Feb. 26, 2011, at Steinbrenner Field in Tampa, Fla.
Associated Press

MLB players, owners start bargaining

SARASOTA, Fla. — While the NFL moved toward a possible work stoppage, baseball's union and management starting bargaining on a labor agreement to replace the deal that expires in December. Union head Michael Weiner said the first formal bargaining session was held Wednesday at spring training. "It was a productive session. We had a very strong showing of players there," Weiner said Thursday after meeting with the Baltimore Orioles as part of his spring training tour. "We had a good dialogue with the owner's representatives and good contributions from the players themselves." □

THE DON



Vonn can tie Paerson for 4th on skiing's win list

Lindsey Vonn of the United States celebrates her second place in a alpine ski, women's World Cup super G, in Are, Sweden, Sunday, Feb. 27, 2011.

Associated Press

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Vonn poised to tie Paerson on all-time win list

ANDREW DAMPF

AP Sports Writer

TARVISIO, Italy (AP) — Back at full strength after her head injury, Lindsey Vonn is poised to tie Swedish stand-out Anja Paerson on skiing's all-time wins list this weekend.

Vonn won the 40th World Cup race of her career in Are, Sweden, last weekend and will have three chances over the next three days to match Paerson with her 41st victory. The weekend's racing opens with a super-combined Friday, followed by a downhill Saturday and a super-G Sunday.

When the women last raced in Tarvisio two years ago, Vonn posted one victory and two runner-up finishes.

Only three more women lie beyond Paerson on the wins list: Austrian great Annemarie Moser-Proell leads with 62 victories, Vreni Schneider of Switzerland has 55 and recently retired Renate Goetschl has 46.

"I'm still a long ways off, so I'm just going to try winning races and we'll see where I stand at the end of my career, but I still have a lot that I would like to accomplish," the 26-year-old Vonn said Thursday. Paerson is still racing, although she's not sure she'll enter each race this weekend due to knee problems, and the Swede hasn't won a race all season.

Still, Paerson has a record that



Lindsey Vonn of the United States celebrates her second place in a alpine ski, women's World Cup super G, in Are, Sweden, Sunday, Feb. 27, 2011
Associated Press

Vonn can't match this weekend. The Swede is one of four skiers to post wins in all five disciplines since super-G was introduced in 1982, with the others being Austria's Petra Kronberger, Sweden's Pernilla Wiberg and Croatia's Janica Kostelic.

Vonn has won in every discipline but giant slalom, where she has never been on the podium.

"Winning all five events would be something that I really would like to achieve, so I have some years left that I can still get that in, but I would

like to try get it sooner rather than later," Vonn said.

Vonn sat out the second half of last month's world championships due to lingering effects of a concussion, but those symptoms are gone now.

"I feel fresh and my head feels good," she said. "I feel like my concentration is there and I'm able to ski the way I want to ski." Vonn trails German rival and good friend Maria Riesch by 196 points in the overall standings, with only two more stops on the circuit following this weekend.

It's looking likely that the American's run of three consecutive overall titles will come to an end.

"It's Maria's title to lose at

this point," Vonn said. "All I have to do is try my best and try to win races and in ski racing anything is possible, so I'm not giving up yet."

However, Vonn does have a chance to clinch her fourth successive World Cup downhill title this weekend, and her third straight crystal globe in super-G.

And while Vonn is going after globes, American teammate Julia Mancuso is aiming to establish herself as skiing's third force behind Vonn and Riesch.

Mancuso currently sits fifth overall, 58 points behind Austria's Elisabeth Goergl and 17 points behind Slovenia's Tina Maze. The Californian is third

in the downhill standings behind Vonn and Riesch and fourth in the super-G ranks, trailing Swiss teenager Lara Gut by just 15 points.

"A good goal for me is to keep pushing to be top three in super-G, downhill and even the overall is a possibility," Mancuso said.

Finishing even in the top five overall would be quite a jump for Mancuso, who was 20th last season and 27th in 2008-09. She placed third in 2006-07 before being slowed by hip and back problems for several seasons.

While she has won Olympic and world championship silver medals over the past two seasons, Mancuso hasn't won a race in exactly four years, with her last victory coming right here in Tarvisio.

"Time seems to be going fast and it's nice to be skiing fast again," Mancuso said.

This weekend should also mark a celebration of sorts for Maze, whose gold in super-combined at the worlds marked Slovenia's first major championship victory in Alpine skiing.

Maze was treated to a hero's welcome with 3,000 people on hand at a celebration in Ljubljana a couple of weeks ago and Slovenian fans should have no problem reaching Tarvisio, with the border only about a 10-minute drive away.

"I was waiting a long time to get a gold and it finally worked out for me, so I feel really satisfied with my career now," Maze said. "Now I can just relax and enjoy the skiing." □

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President Barack Obama makes an opening statement during his joint news conference with Mexican President Felipe Calderon, Thursday, March 3, 2011, in the East Room of the White House in Washington.

Associated Press

Obama: No plans to step into NFL labor dispute

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Barack Obama has a clear message for NFL players and team owners: I don't intend to get involved in your labor dispute and you should be able to work things out so each side has enough money. As the league and the players' union held talks near the White House to avoid a work stoppage, Obama said at a news conference that an

industry making \$9 billion a year should find a way to divide up all those dollars.

Obama said "I've got a lot of other stuff to do," — such as the crisis in Libya. There's a Friday 0500 GMT deadline to reach a new contract.

The NFL hasn't had a work stoppage since 1987. Failure to reach a new contract would jeopardize the 2011 NFL season. □

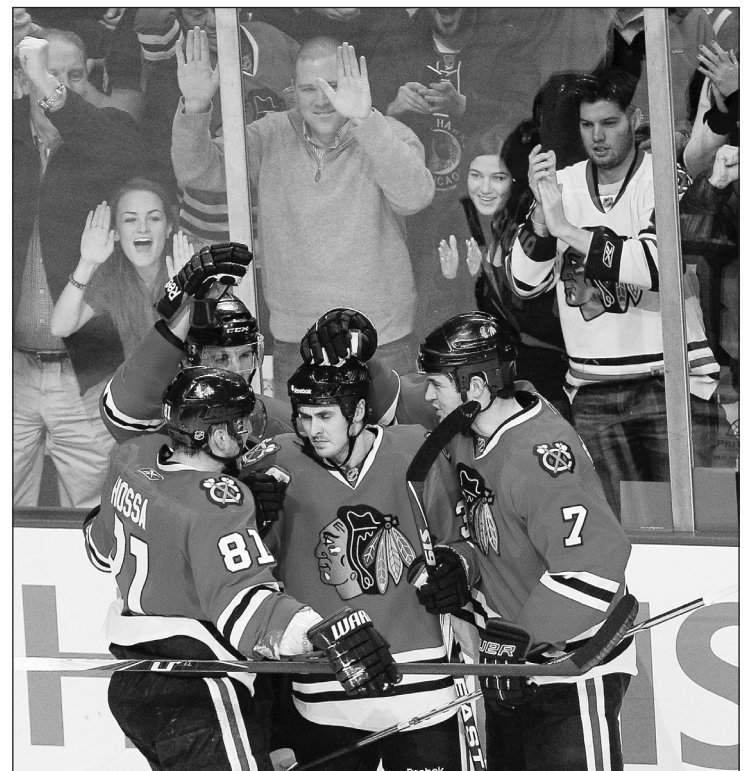
NHL Roundup

Toews scores two goals for streaking Blackhawks

The Associated Press
CHICAGO (AP) — Jonathan Toews scored two goals as the Chicago Blackhawks held off the Calgary Flames 6-4 on Wednesday to extend their winning streak to a season-high six games. Brian Campbell, Michael Frolik, Dave Bolland and Marian Hossa also scored for surging defending Stanley Cup champion Chicago. Rene Bourque scored twice and Jarome Iginla connected once in the third period for the Flames, who fell short in trying to come back from a 4-1 deficit. Alex Tanguay added a goal and an assist for Calgary, which lost in

regulation for only the second time in its last eight games. Blackhawks rookie Corey Crawford made 21 saves in his ninth straight start.
Ducks 2, Red Wings 1, OT At Anaheim, Calgary, Bobby Ryan scored from a penalty shot at 2:50 of overtime as Anaheim snapped Detroit's five-game road winning streak with a wild victory. Ryan was hauled down on a breakaway moments after the Ducks killed off a penalty, and the American goal-scorer put a quick shot past Jimmy Howard's glove for his 30th goal of the season. Dan Ellis made 28 saves for

the Ducks, who have won two straight after a five-game skid threatened their playoff chances. Jason Blake had a third-period goal for Anaheim.
Pavel Datsyuk scored a second-period power-play goal, and Howard made 26 saves for Detroit.
Maple Leafs 3, Penguins 2, OT At Toronto, Mikhail Grabovski scored 42 seconds into overtime to give Toronto a victory over Pittsburgh. Grabovski took a nice pass from Phil Kessel, who tied it in the third period, and stuffed a shot behind Marc-Andre Fleury. Nikolai Kulemin also



Chicago Blackhawks center Dave Bolland, center, celebrates his goal with teammates, from left, Marian Hossa, Bryan Bickell and Brent Seabrook during the third period of an NHL hockey game against the Calgary Flames on Wednesday, March 2, 2011, in Chicago. The Blackhawks won 6-4.

Associated Press

CTE found in Probert's brain tissue

By IRA PODELL
AP Hockey Writer

Bob Probert knew the fierce pounding he dished out and received over 16 seasons as an NHL enforcer was taking its toll as he got older. That's why he wanted his brain to be analyzed once he died. Even though heart failure ultimately ended his life last July at age 45, Probert also was living with a damaged brain. Researchers at Boston University said Thursday that Probert had the degenerative brain disease Chronic Traumatic Encephalopathy. The disease was found through analysis of brain tissue donated by Probert.

He is the second hockey player from the program at the Center for the Study of Traumatic Encephalopathy to be diagnosed with the disease after death. Reggie Fleming, a 1960s enforcer who played before helmets became mandatory, also had CTE. CSTE is a collaboration between Boston University Medical School and the Sports Legacy Institute that is attempting to address what it calls the "concussion crisis" in sports. The group has been at the forefront of research into



In this Oct. 30, 2001 photo, Chicago Blackhawks' Bob Probert (24) and Los Angeles Kings' Ken Belanger (12) mix it up in the third period of an NHL hockey game in Chicago.

Associated Press

head trauma in sports, and has received a \$1 million gift from the NFL, which it has pushed for better treatment of concussions. The family of former Bears safety Dave Duerson agreed to donate his brain to the study after he committed suicide last month at the age of 50. During his years as one of the most feared players in the NHL, Probert had 3,300 penalty minutes — fifth on the league's career list. He was the toughest and most prolific fighter of his time. Probert, who struggled to overcome drinking problems during his

time in the NHL, played for the Detroit Red Wings from 1985-94 and the Chicago Blackhawks from 1995-2002. "We are only beginning to appreciate the consequences of brain trauma in sports," said Chris Nowinski, the Sports Legacy Institute's co-founder and chief executive officer. "Early evidence indicates that the historical decision not to discourage contact to the head was an enormous mistake, and we hope aggressive changes continue to be made to protect athletes, especially at the youth level." □

scored for the Maple Leafs. Matt Niskanen and Chris Conner scored for Pittsburgh.
Devils 2, Lightning 1 At Newark, New Jersey, Ilya Kovalchuk scored his fifth winning goal in the last 11 games as New Jersey continued its amazing playoff push with a victory over Tampa Bay. Martin Brodeur had 15 saves and Henrik Tallinder also scored as the Devils won for the 18th time in 22 games. Dominic Moore scored for Tampa Bay, which had a

three-game winning streak snapped.

Islanders 4, Wild 1

At Uniondale, New York, Blake Comeau scored two goals and Al Montoya made 33 saves in non-taxing fashion to help New York beat sluggish Minnesota. Comeau, who had gone seven games without scoring, gave the Islanders a 1-0 lead in the first period and a 3-0 edge in the second. Kyle Okposo and Andrew MacDonald added goals for New York. □

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Afridi restores some sanity to World Cup, just

GERALD IMRAY

AP Sports Writer

MOHALI, India (AP) — Shahid Afridi restored some sanity to another logic-defying match at the World Cup by leading Pakistan to a narrow escape against tournament doormat Canada on Thursday. If Ireland's dramatic come-from-behind defeat of England was a shock, a Canada win over the 1992 World Cup winner would have made a complete mockery of every sensible pre-match prediction. Canada had been smashed by 210 runs by Sri Lanka and battered by 175 runs by Zimbabwe, but bowled out a strong Pakistan lineup for just 184 in the Group A match in Colombo.

At 111-4 Canada was on course for a victory that may even have overshadowed Ireland's immense effort, only for Afridi to remove four batsman in 22 deliveries, including two in two balls, and end the craziness at R. Premadasa Stadium.

Afridi also ran out Balaji Rao

with a direct hit, and Wahab Riaz officially wrapped it up with a toe-crunching yorker to bowl Henry Osinde to leave Canada all out for 138 and Pakistan with a 46-run victory — and a huge sigh of relief.

"It's a very good wake-up call for us for the next game," captain Afridi said. "Coach Waqar Younis and myself will definitely talk to the boys that it does not happen again."

But in between Ireland's and Canada's efforts to keep the smaller teams flying high, the Netherlands let them down earlier on Thursday when it crashed to a 231-run loss to South Africa in the northern city of Mohali.

Hashim Amla and AB de Villiers underlined their respective No. 1 and No. 2 world ODI batting rankings with centuries and a shared 221-run partnership, a one-day record for South Africa for the third wicket. The Dutch never recovered.

Netherlands was bowled out for 120 in reply to South Africa's massive 351-5 — also



Pakistan captain Shahid Afridi, right, celebrates the wicket of Canada's batsman Harvir Baidwan, left, with his team mates during the ICC Cricket World Cup match between Canada and Pakistan in Colombo, Sri Lanka, Thursday, March 3, 2011.

Associated Press

a record ODI score at Mohali. De Villiers stood out again in the Group B encounter after his unbeaten century in South Africa's opening match against West Indies. He hit 134 off 98 balls against the Dutch, and Amla stroked 113, allowing captain Graeme Smith a better night's sleep after he watched Ireland upset England the night before and wondered if his team was next.

"I didn't sleep for about an hour last night after that," Smith said as South Africa notched a second win in two games.

Following England's catastrophe at Chinnaswamy Stadium, captain Andrew Strauss was trying to quickly figure out the reasons behind his team's failure to stop a rampant Kevin O'Brien ahead of a massive match with South Africa on Sunday. "Our bowling could have been better," Strauss said with remarkable understatement. "We got taken by surprise there and we can't afford

to give away those kind of chances here ... we were asking for trouble."

So was Pakistan when some ill-disciplined batting saw it slip to 67-4 against a Canadian attack missing its best bowler after Khurram Chohan injured a hamstring in the seventh over.

In Chohan's absence, Harvir Baidwan (3-35) led a gutsy effort and only a 73-run stand between Misbah-ul-Haq and Umar Akmal rescued Pakistan from serious embarrassment. Pakistan may also have come to regret its decision to rest paceman Shoaib Akhtar when Canada edged toward a winning total, but Afridi dragged his team to victory with a remarkable spell of fast legspin bowling.

Rizwan Cheema, Jimmy Hansra, Baidwan and Tyson Gordon all fell to Afridi in less than four overs as the Pakistan captain picked up 5-23, increasing his tournament-leading wicket haul to 14.

More importantly for his team, Pakistan improved its record

to three wins in three games at the World Cup.

On Friday, New Zealand will be on high alert, as all the bigger teams are now, when it faces underdog Zimbabwe in Ahmadabad in Group A.

Both teams will aim to settle into some consistency after up and down campaigns so far with New Zealand, especially, hoping for a return to the form that saw it beat Kenya by 10 wickets and not the limp performance when it was seen off by seven wickets by Australia.

In Group B, Bangladesh and West Indies have been given a quarterfinal boost following England's slip-up. Both will want to take advantage in Mirpur in a game that could boil down to Bangladesh's spin bowlers vs. West Indies' batsmen.

"We can bowl up to 40 overs with spin, so that would be our focus," said Bangladesh captain Shakib Al Hasan, with little effort to hide the tournament co-hosts' greatest strength. □



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NBA Roundup

George Hill leads Spurs past Cavaliers, 109-99

CLEVELAND (AP) — George Hill equaled a season high with 22 points as the San Antonio Spurs beat the Cleveland Cavaliers 109-99 on Wednesday to become the first NBA team to reach 50 wins.

Tim Duncan scored 16 points and DeJuan Blair had 14 points and 10 rebounds for the Spurs, who bounced back from a 109-93 loss to Memphis on Tuesday. San Antonio, playing its second game since point guard Tony Parker with a calf injury, also got 14 points from Gary Neal and 13 each from All-Star Manu Ginobili and Matt Bonner.

Samardo Samuels, making his first NBA start, had a career-high 23 points for Cleveland. Timberwolves 116, Pistons 105

At Auburn Hills, Michigan, Kevin Love had 20 points and 20 rebounds, and Anthony Randolph was among three reserves in double figures scoring for the Timberwolves. Lazar Hayward scored a

career-high 16 points and Anthony Tolliver added 13 for Minnesota, which has won three of its last five road games after a 2-23 start away from home.

Love's double-double was his 48th in a row, the longest streak since Moses Malone's 51 straight games in 1978-79. Love appeared to hurt his right thigh late but played on.

Austin Daye scored a career-high 22 points for the Pistons. **Hawks 83, Bulls 80**

At Atlanta, Al Horford matched his career high with 31 points, including a jam with 29 seconds remaining to give Atlanta its first lead of the game.

Horford had 16 rebounds and two steals, including one after his go-ahead basket that set up a jam by Joe Johnson for the final margin.

Luol Deng had 15 points, Joakim Noah had 13 points and 12 rebounds and Derrick Rose had 12 points and 12 assists for Chicago.

Warriors 106, Wizards 102

At Washington, Stephen Curry scored 29 points as Golden State snapped a four-game losing streak and improved to 1-2 on their season-high seven-game road trip.

Monta Ellis scored 21 points and David Lee added nine points and 16 rebounds for the Warriors, who outrebounded Washington 54-40. Nick Young had 31 points for the Wizards.

Celtics 115, Suns 103

At Boston, Kevin Garnett scored 28 points with 11 rebounds, Paul Pierce had 16 and 13 and Rajon Rondo scored 16 with 15 assists to lead Boston past Phoenix.

Aaron Brooks scored 17 points, former Boston College star Jared Dudley had 15 and fellow reserve Marcin Gortat had 13 points and 13 rebounds. The Suns played the last 17 minutes without Vince Carter and Channing Frye, who banged heads and left the game.

Knicks 107, Hornets 88

At New York, Amare



Golden State Warriors' Monta Ellis (8) drive against Washington Wizards' Andray Blatche, second form left while Warriors Dorell Wright (1) and David Lee (10) look on during the second half of an NBA basketball game in Washington, Wednesday, March 2, 2011. Warriors won 106-102.

Associated Press

NFL, union agree to 24-hour deadline extension

By HOWARD FENDRICH
AP Pro Football Writer

WASHINGTON — America's favorite sport is still in business — for another day. The NFL and the players' union agreed Thursday to a 24-hour extension of the current collective bargaining agreement so that negotiations can continue.

Indianapolis Colts center Jeff Saturday, a member of the NFL Players Association's executive committee, told The Associated Press about the extension after the sides met for about eight hours before a federal mediator. The CBA was set to expire at midnight, which would likely have prompted the first work stoppage since 1987 for a league that rakes in \$9 billion a year. "We just know right now that we granted a 24-hour extension," Saturday said as he and Steelers quarterback Charlie Batch left the session. Union executive director DeMaurice Smith emerged from the talks soon after.

"For all our fans who dig our game, we appreciate your patience as we work through this," he said. "We are going to keep working. We want to play football."

Failing to make a deal could put the two sides on the road to a year without football, even though opening kickoff of the 2011 season is still six months away. The labor unrest comes as the NFL is at the height of its popularity, breaking records for TV ratings: This year's Super Bowl was the most-watched program in U.S. history. Without a new CBA, the owners could lock out the players, and the union could

decertify to try and prevent that through the courts — something the NFLPA did in 1989. It formed again in 1993. While the league and players' union met for a 10th day with mediator George Cohen, even President Barack Obama weighed in when asked if he would intervene in the dispute. "I'm a big football fan," Obama said, "but I also think that for an industry that's making \$9 billion a year in revenue, they can figure out how to divide it up in a sensible way and be true to their fans, who are the ones who obviously allow for all the money that they're making. □

Stoudemire scored 24 points and Carmelo Anthony added 22 as New York rolled to its sixth straight win over New Orleans.

Toney Douglas also scored 24 points in place of an injured Chauncey Billups, outplaying slumping Hornets All-Star Chris Paul in the point guard matchup. Shawne Williams finished with 16 points off the bench, 11 in the third quarter when the Knicks broke open the game.

Jarrett Jack scored 21 points and David West had 16 for the Hornets, who have lost three straight.

Thunder 113, Pacers 89

At Oklahoma City, Kevin Durant scored 21 points before leaving with a sprained

left ankle as Oklahoma City snapped its first three-game losing streak of the season.

Russell Westbrook added 21 points and nine assists and James Harden scored 17 of his 20 points during the first half, when Oklahoma City built a 22-point lead.

In other NBA games it was Atlanta 83, Chicago 80; San Antonio 109, Cleveland 99; Golden State 106, Washington 102; Boston 115, Phoenix 103; Minnesota 116, Detroit 105; New York 107, New Orleans 88; Oklahoma City 113, Indiana 89; Denver 120, Charlotte 80; Portland 107, Sacramento 102; L.A. Clippers 106, Houston 103. □

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Los Angeles Galaxy's David Beckham reacts during the second half against the Club Tijuana during an exhibition soccer game Wednesday, March 2, 2011, in San Diego.

Associated Press

David Beckham returns to L.A. Galaxy in losing effort

SAN DIEGO (AP) — David Beckham gave Los Angeles Galaxy fans plenty of reason to cheer in his return match Wednesday, despite Mexico's Club Xoloitzcuintles de Caliente defeating the Major League Soccer team 4-3 in a shootout. Gilberto Mora opened the scoring for Xoloitzcuintles in the friendly at Torero Stadium, before Beckham fired in a corner that was redirected past keeper Zemenko in the 41st minute to level the scores. Landon Donovan gave Los Angeles a 2-1 lead in the 75th when he converted a pass from Chris Burchall. The Mexican club rallied in the 82nd minute when Miguel Lopez scored a penalty. □

FIFA chooses Canada to host 2015 Women's World Cup

ZURICH (AP) — FIFA has chosen Canada to host the women's World Cup in 2015. Canada was the only candidate after Zimbabwe withdrew from the contest because of its lack of infrastructure. Canada also will host the women's under-20 World Cup in 2014 as a test event. FIFA also awarded hosting rights for the men's U20 World Cup to Turkey in 2013 and New Zealand in 2015. The men's U17 World Cup will be staged in the United Arab Emirates in 2013 and Chile in 2015. Uzbekistan was chosen by FIFA's executive committee to host the women's U20 World Cup in 2012. Costa Rica will host the women's U17 World Cup in 2014. □

UCI: Radio ban to go ahead

PARIS (AP) — UCI president Pat McQuaid says a ban on using radio communication during races will be implemented as planned after meeting with representatives from the professional teams' association. McQuaid met a delegation from the AIGCP at UCI's headquarters in Aigle, Switzerland, in a bid to find a compromise on the issue. The UCI says the discussion "took place in a calm and constructive atmosphere" but McQuaid "confirmed that the principle of progressively banning earpieces will go forward as planned." □

Roddick vs. Massu to open Chile-U.S. tie

SANTIAGO, Chile (AP) — The United States doesn't have home-court advantage against Chile but it's favored even on Santiago's clay courts this weekend.

The Americans feature world No. 8 Andy Roddick, No. 32 John Isner and the top-ranked doubles team of Bob and Mike Bryan.

They also have Jim Courier, a four-time Grand Slam champion, making his debut as captain.

None of the three Chileans playing this weekend are ranked in the top 150 in the world. Fernando Gonzalez, Chile's most accomplished player and a former top-10 star, was out of action with a hip injury.

Paul Capdeville was Chile's highest-ranked player at No. 165.

Nicolas Massu, the 2004 Olympic gold medalist in singles and doubles, was No. 241 after years of fighting injuries.

The Chileans will send Massu and Jorge Aguilar into doubles action. Guillermo Rivera-Aranguiz was not selected to play during the draw on Thursday at the tie venue, Estadio Nacional Court Central.

Roddick, returning to Davis Cup after taking last year off from the competition, will start the tie facing Massu on Friday. That match will be followed by Isner against Capdeville.

"I did miss it (Davis Cup)," Roddick said of not playing last season. "I missed these guys, the competition and the spirit of it all."

"It's a big reason why I came back and the opportunity to play for Jim was a big factor as well."

Without Roddick last year, the U.S. lost to eventual champion Serbia in the first round, and stayed in the World Group by winning a playoff against Colombia in Bogota.

The star of that win, Mardy



Chile's tennis player Nicolas Massu, left, shakes hand with U.S. tennis player Andy Roddick after the draw for the upcoming Davis Cup tennis tournament between Chile and U.S. in Santiago, Chile, Thursday March 3, 2011.

Associated Press

Fish, wasn't available this time because of a thyroid problem.

Saturday's doubles lines up the Byran twins against Aguilar and Massu.

In Sunday's reverse singles, Roddick will play Capdeville in the first match, and Isner will take on Massu in the last match of the weekend.

Courier, a former Davis Cup star who played on the 1992 and 1995 winning U.S. teams, believes his team can deal with the unfavorable factors of playing in Chile: Clay courts and being away from home.

"Going in and playing an away tie is always a challenge," Courier said. "The one thing about the Davis Cup is that the home team has the advantage of setting the conditions as they like."

"Having said that we're very hopeful this week. And the altitude here helps us as we have four great servers on this

team.

We're not expecting it to be easy, but as far as the conditions go we're comfortable."

Hans Gildemeister, the longtime Chile captain, acknowledged the Americans have the advantage, but was hopeful that the home crowd, dirt court and expectations for the U.S. to succeed will work in Chile's favor.

"I think the pressure is on America and I hope tomorrow they are going to feel the pressure on the court," Gildemeister said. "I hope that tomorrow will be very competitive. And we all know the pressure of playing Davis Cup is very different than playing on the ATP Tour."

The Americans need to beat us. They have the better rankings, they have a great team, and we are the underdog. I like that." The U.S. holds a 4-0 record over Chile. They last met in 2006. □

Cable company inserts ads as subscribers surf

By PETER SVENSSON
AP Technology Writer
NEW YORK — Mediacom Communications Corp., a cable company with more than 800,000 Internet subscribers, has tried something other U.S. Internet service providers have shied away from: It has inserted its own ads into Web pages as its subscribers surfed. Ads for Mediacom's home phone service have shown up on the normally ad-free home pages of Google.com and Apple.com, according to subscribers.

There are only a few reports of the ads showing up, starting last week, and many Mediacom subscribers on Web

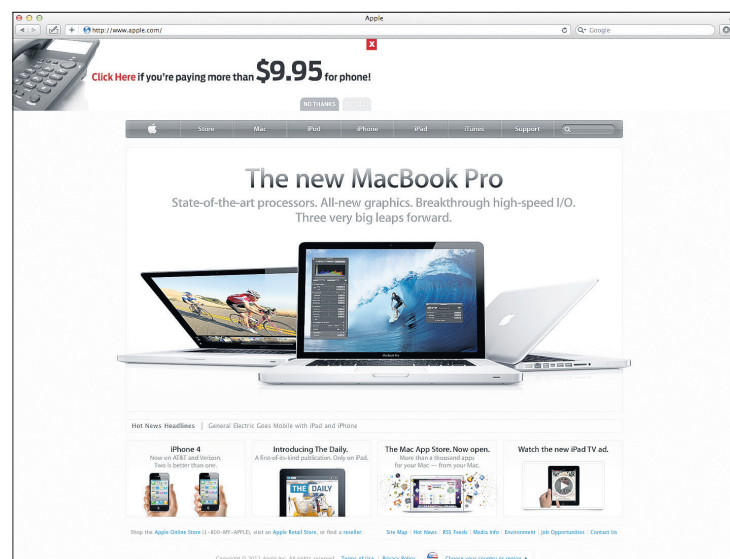
forums said they had not seen any. That leaves the possibility that the ads were part of a test run rather than a full-fledged rollout.

The company won't say. Spokesman Thomas Larsen said the company's senior vice president of technology was unavailable for comment. On the company's Web forum, a complaining subscriber is told by a Mediacom representative that the issue has been "escalated to the corporate office and we are still investigating."

Mediacom, which is based in Middletown, N.Y., has subscribers in scattered areas, mainly in the Midwest and Southeast.

Matt Thomas, a Mediacom subscriber in Baldwin County, Ala., said he first saw an ad a week ago, on Apple.com. At first, he thought his computer might have been infected with some virus-like software that inserts ads. Then he realized it was coming from his Internet service provider, the cable company.

"I'm a designer and a creative director for a Web development company, so the idea of an ISP injecting ads onto a Web page is horrifying to me as a designer," Thomas said. "Especially with something like Apple.com, which never has ads on it. It's kind of like they're putting ads on HBO or



In this screen shot provided by Matt Thomas, a Mediacom Communications Corp. Internet ad for home phone service is displayed on the Apple.com website.

Associated Press

Showtime, in my eyes."

He saw a button to decline ads in the future and clicked it. He hasn't seen one since. Because the company is silent, it's not known if it's planning to offer some sort of incentive to customers who agree to see ads.

Thomas and other users first reported their experiences on Broadbandreports.com.

PerfTech Inc., a company in San Antonio, Texas, sells a system that allows cable companies to insert messages in Web pages seen by subscribers. Besides serving ads,

the system can alert subscribers to emergencies or let them know if they're approaching their data consumption limits, according to PerfTech's website.

It says five of North America's top cable companies, unnamed, are customers. PerfTech officials were in a meeting and not immediately available to comment.

Rogers Communications, a Canadian cable company, inserts notices into Web pages to warn subscribers that they're approaching their monthly data limits. □

Microsoft's Bing mobile site pulls in daily deals

JESSICA MINTZ,
AP Technology Writer
SEATTLE (AP) — Microsoft Corp. is hoping to capitalize on the popularity of daily deals websites by incorporating them into its Bing search site for smart phones.

On the updated Bing mobile site, people can click on a "deals" link to see the top offers for their city from Groupon, LivingSocial and about 200 other daily coupon sites, Microsoft said. Another click shows nearby stores, restaurants and other merchants currently offering a deal, based on the phone's current location. People can also use Bing to search local deals by category.

Microsoft said it is working with The Dealmap, a company that aggregates deals by city. Microsoft analyses the information it gets from



The Dealmap and displays each deal as a pinpoint on a map, so people looking for a neighborhood mechanic offering discounted oil changes, for example, could spot it at a glance.

The move comes as Microsoft tries to look for innovations through partnerships, rather than simply see a popular idea and copy it with a product of its own.

"Our strategy across Bing is to identify fast movers," said Stefan Weitz, a director in the Bing group, "and work with them, not against them."

Chicago-based Groupon

and its ilk work with businesses to devise a deal, such as \$10 for \$20 worth of food at a local restaurant, or \$50 for \$100 worth of services at the auto detailer.

They then post the deal online and e-mail them to members. Once a certain number of people buy in, the deal is on. The number of these group-buying coupon sites has ballooned, including some, such as Gilt Groupe, that organize sales on high-end luxury items.

Even Google Inc., the leading search engine company, is working on its own daily deals system, Google Offers. □

Twitter co-founder says it prizes independence

KELLY OLSEN

AP Business Writer

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — Twitter Inc. co-founder Biz Stone said his company wants to remain independent despite what he called "rumors" it could be acquired. "I believe there is a lot of room for another Internet giant to succeed," Stone said Thursday. "So our goal with Twitter is, has been, and will continue to be to remain an independent company no matter what rumors are swirling." Stone, who made the comments at a conference in the South Korean capital on the global economy and the future, was responding to a question from a participant about speculation in the media that Google Inc. or Facebook Inc. want to acquire the privately held social networking service. "There's always another rumor that somebody's trying to acquire us," Stone said. "But our goal is to have a positive impact on the world, build a wonderful business on top of that and have a blast doing it." □

Saturday 19 FEB. 9am-2pm YARD-SALE at Rococo Plaza Parkinglot Tank Leendert Tent
rental afl. 25.- reservation at Antiqueshop Open daily 9-1 afternoon 4-5.30 +saturday ½ day We sell BubbleWrap(plastic)
 Sale Custom jewelry+children books half price Leather men shoes 25.-,belts afl. 2.-,Babystuff afl. 1.,Hairpaint afl. 5.- deodorant,sticks and bodyspray half prijs. Colourspray +paint for carnival afl. 2.—incense+ luckywater afl. 1.--, Plastic containers + lipstick afl. 1.--, steunkousen, pantyhose afl. 5.--,kotex,OB afl. 2.--, RVS Sink , afl. 50.-- Toys Half Price Information call cel. 741-5640. **SALE SALE SALE**



Airlines raising domestic fares again

By DAVID KOENIG
AP Airlines Writer
DALLAS — Major U.S. airlines are raising fares again, and the only question might be the size of the increase. This is the sixth broad fare increase the airlines have tried this year. They are raising fares to cover higher jet fuel prices, and the strategy seems to be working. US Airways said Thursday that if the trend toward higher revenue continues, it will be able to cover foreseeable increases in fuel costs. In the latest fare hike, American Airlines raised fares on flights within the 48 contiguous states by \$10 per round trip, spokesman Tim Smith confirmed on Thursday. Delta Air Lines boosted fares even higher — up \$10, \$14 or even \$20 per round trip depending on flight length,

according to spokesman Trebor Banstetter. The Delta increase was originally aimed at business travelers who buy last-minute tickets but was expanded to all fares after American's price hike. United, Continental and US Airways matched American's increase but not the larger Delta hike, said Rick Seane, CEO of FareCompare.com. He said none of the low-cost airlines — Southwest, JetBlue and AirTran — had raised prices. All the jockeying has left the fate of this price increase up in the air. Airlines sometimes raise fares but then back off if key competitors don't raise their prices. Last week, fares went up \$20 per round trip, but the increase was scaled back to \$10 after some carriers balked at the bigger hike. Some analysts think if prices



A fuel truck backs into position in preparation to refuel an airliner Wednesday, March 2, 2011 at Sky Harbor International Airport in Phoenix. Jet fuel prices have risen about 13 percent in two weeks and are now up 46 percent from a year ago. In turn, U.S. airlines have raised fares six times this year.

Associated Press

go any higher, leisure travelers fliers — will just stay home. — and maybe a few corporate Hudson Securities analyst

Daniel McKenzie said higher fares will cause companies to burn through their travel budgets, and they'll respond by freezing or reducing travel later this year. Seane, doesn't share that view yet. "It is pretty clear that demand hasn't softened enough to prevent airlines from testing new highs for base domestic ticket prices," he said. US Airways president Scott Kirby said Thursday that travel demand in February remained "exceptionally strong," allowing the company to generate enough revenue to offset higher fuel prices. Traffic on Kirby's airline rose more than 4 percent and a key measure of revenue per mile rose 10 percent in February, compared with a year ago. □

UN: Food prices hit record high in February

ALESSANDRA RIZZO
Associated Press
ROME (AP) — Global food prices have reached their highest point in 20 years and could increase further because of rising oil prices stemming from the unrest in Libya and the Mideast, a U.N. agency warned Thursday. Skyrocketing food prices have been among the triggers for protests in Egypt, Tunisia and elsewhere, and raised fears of a repeat of the food price crises in 2007 and 2008. Some experts point to key differences compared to those years: for one, the price of rice, an important food security commodity, is much lower today. Still, Oxfam called the hike "deeply worrying." The Food and Agriculture Organization said in a statement that its food price index was up 2.2 percent last month, the highest record in both real, inflation-

corrected terms and nominal terms since the agency started monitoring prices two decades ago. It also was the eighth consecutive month that food prices had risen, the Rome-based agency said. In January, the index had already registered a record peak. The increase was driven mostly by higher prices of cereals, meat and dairy products, FAO said. Sugar was the only commodity of the groups being monitored whose price hadn't risen. Global oil prices, which increased on concerns about the potential impact of supply disruptions following unrest in Libya, are a crucial variable. "Unexpected oil price spikes could further exacerbate an already precarious situation in food markets," said David Hallam, director of FAO's trade and market division. "This adds even more uncertainty concerning the price out-

look just as plantings for crops in some of the major growing regions are about to start." Oil prices affect food markets in many ways, from production to transport costs. One crucial link is through bio-fuels: when oil prices are high, there is a bigger incentive to produce more biofuels, using crops and driving food prices up, said Abdolreza Abbassian, senior grains economist with FAO. "This is what happened in 2007-2008," he said in an interview with The Associated Press. "The longer these prices remain high, the more we have to think that it could have a spillover effect into the grain sector, especially in coming weeks and months." Abbassian noted that compared to the crisis of 2007-08, rice prices today are half what they were then. Global stock levels are for the most part ample compared to

three years ago, he said, but they are being drawn down and could become a factor this year and next year. "In the face of growing demand and a decline in world cereal production in 2010, global cereal stocks this year are expected to fall sharply," the agency said. The FAO index records monthly changes in international prices of a basket of food commodities, including cereal, oils and fats and sugar. Oxfam, the aid group, urged governments to tackle the issue together with measures including curbing speculation, increasing transparency on food stocks and reversing the drive for biofuels. "Millions more people are sliding into poverty as they struggle to afford basic food supplies," said Oxfam's food policy adviser Thierry Kesteloot. "A sit-and-wait attitude among governments in the hope that there



In this June 11, 2010 file photo, wheat stands against a setting sun near Isabel, Kan. A U.N. food agency said Thursday, March 3, 2011, that global food prices reached new highs in February and warns that oil price spikes could provoke further increases.

Associated Press

will be good harvests over the next few months means gambling with people's lives." □

Unemployment aid requests fall to near 3-year low

JEANNINE AVERSA
AP Economics Writer
WASHINGTON (AP) — The number of Americans requesting unemployment benefits last week plunged to a nearly three-year low, bolstering the likelihood that companies will increase the pace of hiring this year. Applications for unemployment benefits fell by 20,000 to a seasonally adjusted 368,000, the Labor Department said Thursday. It was the third decline in the past four weeks. Applications are now at their lowest level since May 2008. The four-week average for applications, a less volatile figure, fell last week to 388,500. That's the lowest level since July 2008, the last time the four-week average was below 400,000. Applications that remain consistently below 375,000 tend to signal steady declines in the unemployment rate. Unemployment benefit applications peaked during the recession at 651,000. Analysts are predicting strong job gains in the February employment report, which the government will release Friday. Brightening the outlook for more aggressive hiring, the ser-

vice sector expanded at the fastest pace in more than five years in February, and the manufacturing sector grew last month at the fastest pace in nearly seven years. And retailers are reporting solid gains for February after the best holiday shopping season since 2006. Stocks surged after the economic data was released. The Dow Jones industrial average rose by more than 180 points in morning trading. "Often at this stage of the recovery, when these signals are in place, we see a surge in hiring," said John Ryding, an economist with RDQ Economics. Economists estimate that employers added a net 175,000 jobs in February. That would mark an improvement from an anemic 36,000 jobs in January when severe winter weather held back hiring. At the same time, economists think the unemployment rate edged up to 9.1 percent in February. Unemployment rates often tick up when an improving economy causes out-of-work people who haven't been looking for jobs to start. People out of work aren't counted as unemployed unless they're job hunting. During a weak econo-



In this Feb. 17, 2011 photo, businesses solicit students as they fill out job applications during the Springfield Collegiate Career Job Fair at the University of Illinois Springfield, in Springfield, Ill. The number of people requesting unemployment benefits last week plunged to a nearly three-year low, bolstering hopes that companies will hire more this year.

Associated Press

my, some people become discouraged and stop looking. Separately, retailers reported revenue gains for February, extending the spending momentum seen during the holiday season. Limited Brands Inc. and Macy's Inc. reported gains that beat Wall Street expectations, while Target Corp. announced an increase slightly below analysts' projections.

The figures are based on revenue at stores open at least a year and are considered a sign of a retailer's health. The service sector, which employs about 90 percent of U.S. workers, grew in February at the fastest pace in more than five years, according to the Institute for Supply Management. It marked the sixth straight monthly increase. □

Oil falls on profit taking, Libya hopes

NEW YORK (AP) — Oil prices retreated Thursday from two-year highs set a day before as investors took out profits and hoped that the conflict in Libya might be resolved by international mediation. Benchmark West Texas Intermediate for April delivery gave up 32 cents to settle at at \$101.91 a barrel on the New York Mercantile Exchange. In London, Brent crude fell \$1.56 to settle at \$114.79 per barrel on the ICE Futures Exchange. Oil rose \$2.60 per barrel Wednesday and is up about \$17 per barrel over two weeks. Analysts say traders have mostly priced in the loss of Libyan oil production and are taking profits. Oil prices have remained near highs last seen in 2008 as fighting between rebels and government forces in Libya intensified amid efforts to reach a mediated resolution to the conflict that has cut crude supplies by more than half from the OPEC nation. President Hugo Chavez has spoken with Moammar Gadhafi about creating a bloc of friendly countries to help mediate a resolution to Libya's crisis, Venezuela's information minister said. He said Gadhafi is supporting the plan. "Reports on a peace plan for Libya have put pressure on oil prices," said analysts at Commerzbank in Frankfurt. "This dip in is only temporary in our view. It is doubtful that the protesters in Libya will agree to enter negotiations with Gadhafi." □



Bahraini anti-government protesters wave national flags, flowers and signs criticizing the Interior Ministry and calling for regime change Wednesday, March 2, 2011, outside the main police headquarters in the capital of Manama, Bahrain. Sign at front reads in two languages "Go Away".

Associated Press

Fitch downgrades Bahrain amid political standoff

LONDON (AP) — The Fitch Ratings agency cut oil-rich Bahrain's credit grade by one notch on Thursday, citing the risks of a drawn-out political standoff and its impact on the island nation's economic growth and public finances. Bahrain has seen weeks of protests, which have left seven dead, as Shiite opposition groups seek to loosen the Sunni monarchy's 200-year-old grip on power. The Shiites accuse the ruling minority of discriminating against them and politically persecuting them. "The downgrade reflects Fitch's view that recent political developments will have a short-term impact on growth and result in further fiscal expansion over the medium term," Purvi Harlalka, director of Fitch's Middle East and Africa sovereign ratings division, said in a report. Harlalka noted that "despite the regime's attempts to engage stakeholders in an inclusive national dialogue, any political reform that will appease the protesters is likely to be over an extended horizon." □

Berkshire Hathaway enters India insurance market

ERIKA KINETZ
AP Business Writer
MUMBAI, India (AP) — Billionaire Warren Buffett's Berkshire Hathaway is entering the Indian insurance market as a corporate agent for Bajaj Allianz, the companies said. Berkshire made no investment in Bajaj, but will sell policies for Bajaj Allianz General Insurance, beginning with auto insurance, Bajaj spokesman Santosh Balan said Thursday. Insurance for India's fast-growing auto market accounts for over 50 percent of Bajaj Allianz's premium income, which amounted to 20.9 billion rupees (\$465 million) from April through December, Balan said. Berkshire's new India unit, Berkshire India, will focus on direct sales via internet and telemarketing and get commissions per regulatory norms. It may move into other lines of insurance as well. "We have been watching the Indian insurance industry for a long time and are very excited about the immense opportunity," Berkshire India director Kara Raiguel said in a Wednesday statement. Foreign companies have been eager to break into India's booming insurance market but have been stymied by strict ownership limits. India's Finance Minister this week pledged to introduce long-delayed legislation that would increase the foreign ownership cap in insurance. □

Carey embarrassed over Gadhafi-linked concert

NEW YORK — Mariah Carey says she was unaware that she was booked to perform a concert linked to Gadhafi's clan and she's embarrassed "to have participated in this mess."

Carey is among a handful of entertainers who were paid



handsome fees to give exclusive private concerts. It was later revealed the people behind those concerts were the family of Libyan leader Moammar Gadhafi, whose country is in an open revolt against him and who faces an investigation for possible war crimes.

This week, Nelly Furtado announced she is giving the \$1 million fee she was paid in 2007 to charity; Beyonce said in a statement Wednesday that she donated her fees for a 2009 New Year's Eve performance in St. Bart's to Haiti earthquake relief once she discovered the Gadhafi link.

Carey performed in St. Bart's in 2008, but in a statement released to The Associated Press she said she didn't know she was performing for an infamous family.

"I was naive and unaware of who I was booked to perform for. I feel horrible and embarrassed to have participated in this mess," the 40-year-old singer said. "Going forward, this is a lesson for all artists to learn from. We need to be more aware and take more responsibility regardless of who books our shows. Ultimately, we as artists are to be held accountable." □

"Blade Runner" classic reboot in the works

LOS ANGELES— The production company behind the Sandra Bullock hit "The Blind Side" is looking to bring the world of "Blade Runner" back to the big screen.

The 1982 cult classic, directed by Ridley Scott and starring Harrison Ford, was set in a future where man has created clones called replicants who are used for dangerous work. When they rebel on a space colony, replicants are banned and hunted down.

Alcon Entertainment is in final negotiations to acquire the prequel and sequel rights from Bud Yorkin, who was an executive producer on the original film. He will serve as a producer on any new projects.

Alcon acknowledged that it had a beloved movie property on its hands and promised to be mindful of that fact.

"This is a major acquisition for our company, and a personal favorite film for both of



Sean Young

us," company principals Andrew Kosove and Broderick Johnson said in a statement. "We recognize the responsibility we have to do justice to the memory of the original with any prequel or sequel we produce. We have long-term goals for the franchise, and are exploring multi-platform concepts, not just limiting ourselves to one medium only."

Warner Bros.-based Alcon is funded by FedEx founder Fred Smith. □

Sammy Hagar:

Eddie Van Halen Lived Like a "Vampire"

When Sammy Hagar agreed to rejoin Van Halen in 2004, he had no idea that his bandmate Eddie Van Halen was living in such squalor.

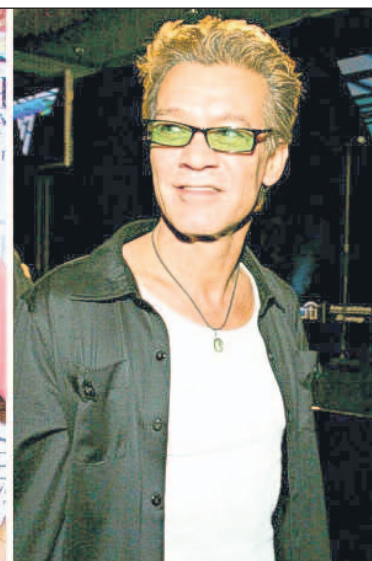
In a book excerpt published in Rolling Stone, the 63-year-old rocker recalls how Eddie, now 56, struggled to keep himself together after Valerie Bertinelli walked out on him.

"He finally invited me over to this giant, extravagant house that he and Valerie had built before she split. It looked like vampires lived there," Hagar recalls. "There were bottles and cans all over the floor. The handle was broken off the refrigerator door. There were spider webs everywhere."

Adding to Hagar's horror, his pal "was sleeping on the floor with blanket and pillow. There was no food in the cupboard. I had never seen a dirtier place in my life. It was like the house out of that movie Grey Gardens."

This was Eddie Van Halen, one of the sweetest guys I ever met.

He had turned into the weirdest guy I'd ever seen: crude,



rude and unkempt."

The hard-partying rock star had invited Hagar over to record new music for the group's reunion tour. Unfortunately, due to the mansion's dilapidated conditions, Eddie's plans never came to fruition.

"He had big blankets thrown over the windows. The mattresses were stripped off the beds and leaned against the wall for soundproofing. He was making music and trying to get the sound right," Hagar explains. "He had dug a trench to run wires from the studio to

his house. We never used it even once for the three songs we eventually did record."

Though Hagar was tempted to pull out of the reunion tour after seeing his friend in such a disheveled state, "Eddie's got a very charming, cunning side to him, where you feel like he's got a good heart. He's going to come through. He's going to clean up and we're going to get this thing done." Unfortunately, the condition of Eddie's home was an early indicator of what became the "craziest, most wacked-out" time in his career. □

Sheen says he's ready to fight to get kids back

LOS ANGELES — Charlie Sheen is living large on the public stage but his personal world is diminished, with the TV star's "Two and a Half Men" and now his twin toddlers missing from his life.

Sheen's 23-month-old boys were taken from his home Tuesday night after estranged wife Brooke Mueller Sheen claimed that he threatened her with decapitation, adding a nasty custody battle to the actor's bitter war with the studio and producers who shut down the hit CBS show short of the season's end.

Her claims followed days of sometimes manic, sometimes violence-tinged media interviews by Sheen, part of a public campaign to disprove that he is a drug-using, reckless playboy who was unable or unfit to work on TV's No. 1 comedy.

In an interview with NBC's "Today" show Wednesday, Sheen said he was "very calm and focused" about having the children taken away but was ready to fight to get them back.

Outside his home a short time later, Sheen, 45, was asked by reporters whether the legal move came out of left field for him.

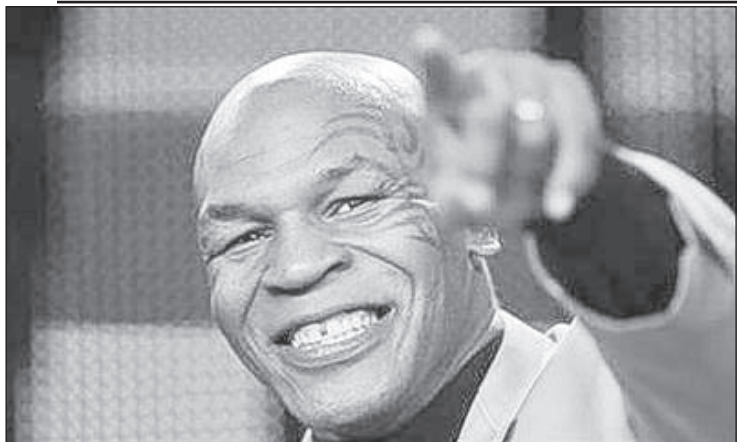
"It came out of the bleachers, actually," he said. "Yeah, I was told a restraining order was being delivered and I thought, 'OK, I can deal with that.' And it was revealed that it was something much more serious."



Asked why Mueller got the court order, he replied, "It's just silly. I think she's latching on to some of this recent press."

In interviews filled with strange comments such as "I got tiger blood, man," Sheen has lobbed vitriol at "Men" executive producer Chuck Lorre and Warner Bros. Television while sharing details about his unusual home life and insisting he was "winning." He's demanding a big raise in future contracts for the show from his \$1.8 million-an-episode pay already among the highest in television.

CBS Corp. chief Leslie Moonves on Tuesday said the series' future is uncertain. Sheen's grandstanding has fascinated the public, with his Twitter account drawing more than 1 million followers a day after it was created. □



Mike Tyson

TV show reveals 'the' Mike Tyson

LOS ANGELES – Long before Mike Tyson became a world champion heavyweight boxer, he threw his first punch over a pigeon.

In fact, Tyson says, pigeons were his first love as a bullied kid on the tough streets of Brooklyn, and later on, birds gave him a sense of peace and tranquility before and after some of his most bruising professional fights.

Now, the man nicknamed "Iron Mike" for his ferocious boxing style is sharing that passion and showing a gentler side of himself in "Taking on Tyson", a six-part documentary starting on the Animal Planet cable TV channel on Sunday, March 6.

"The first thing I ever loved in my life was a pigeon. I don't know why. I feel ridiculous trying to explain it," Tyson, 44, says in the documentary. "Pigeons are part of my life.

It's a constant with my sanity in a weird way; this is just what I do. If I am lucky enough to die an old man. I'm going to have birds."

"Taking on Tyson" is part reflection on a life that has scaled the heights of boxing and the lows of prison, and part glimpse into the subculture of competitive pigeon racing.

"I love pigeons and I thought the TV series would broaden the horizons of people who are not knowledgeable about pigeons," Tyson told Reuters. Tyson, who declared bankruptcy in 2003 and retired from professional boxing in 2006, has 2,500 birds in various locations. He had never raced them before, but set his sights on becoming a world champion in pigeon racing with all the determination he once brought to boxing.

"You gotta train every day,

Balenciaga's new perspective



Paris – A great fashion collection, besides having to be beautiful and of-the-moment, also needs to intrigue which is exactly what the latest show from Balenciaga did, playing on volume, proportion and depth

of yield in a mesmerizing visual display.

That sense of manipulating perspective was apparent from the opening look, a bolero jacket in the cleverest new fabric - a bumpy woven jacket made of thick ropes of leather - worn over a skirt of abstract baroque flowers and vines that had a dramatic depth of field.

Or take the second series in this show, staged in the Crillon Hotel in Paris March 3. Black silken dresses and skirts that undulated around as much as hung on the models, all finished with leather trim of gold metal piping. A favorite version appeared on Australian super model Miranda Kerr, a widow's dress in black silk with futurist metal trim. □

'Glee' covers more Michael, Janet and ABBA music

NEW YORK – The cast of "Glee" could be planning a Michael or Janet Jackson tribute that's if "Glee" star Amber Riley can get her way.

"I think it would be prolific for us to do Janet Jackson," said Riley, who stars as diva-like glee club member Mercedes Jones.

Riley also said a tribute to the King of Pop is overdue.

"We did a mini tribute to Michael Jackson, but we really want to do a full tribute to Michael Jackson because his music is so timeless, so we really want to touch on that," she said.

The cast's sixth CD, "Glee: The Music, Vol. 5," will be out on Tuesday.

It will feature covers of Michael's "Thriller" and "P.Y.T. Pretty Young Thing," as well as the original songs "Loser



Like Me" and "Get It Right," a first for the Grammy-nominated act.

Adam Anders, the show's executive music producer, is more interested in covering "some ABBA because I'm Swedish."

"That would be a lot of fun and I love the harmonies," he said.

Anders also said it "would

be really cool" to remake the 1983 No. 1 song "Africa" from rock group Toto.

The cast of the Fox TV series will kick off a 16-city North American tour on May 21 through June 18; they'll tour Europe for five dates in late June. The cast currently leads with most songs on the Billboard Hot 100 chart with 120 entries. □

Mickey Rooney tells Congress of abuse



Veteran actor Mickey Rooney

WASHINGTON – Veteran actor Mickey Rooney on Wednesday urged elderly victims of abuse to speak up to anyone who will listen and described to a Senate panel his own suffering at the hands of a family member.

"If elder abuse happened to me, Mickey Rooney, it can happen to anyone," the 90-year-old actor said in testimony to the Senate Special Committee on Aging.

In court documents, Rooney accused his stepson Christopher Aber of intimidating and bullying him and blocking access to his mail. The documents also alleged Aber de-

prived Rooney of medications and food.

"My money was taken and misused. When I asked for information, I was told that I couldn't have any of my own information," Rooney told the committee. "I was literally left powerless."

Rooney rose to fame as a child star in the 1930s and 1940s when he made more than a dozen Andy Hardy movies. He appeared frequently alongside Judy Garland and, in his heyday, was one of Hollywood's biggest stars, receiving a junior Oscar in 1938.

Rooney continued to work in movies and television into

his late 80s, appearing in the 2006 film comedy "Night at the Museum," among other works. Rooney told the Senate committee he suffered in silence for years because "I couldn't muster the courage to seek the help I knew I needed." He urged elderly victims to speak out whenever they could.

"Please, for yourself, end the cycle of abuse and do not allow yourself to be silenced any longer," he said.

Rooney eventually won a court order handing control of his affairs over to a Los Angeles attorney and obtained a restraining order against his stepson, who was ordered by the court to stay at least 100 yards from Rooney and his home.

In testimony to the Senate panel, Rooney suggested Congress enact legislation strengthening the law enforcement response to allegations of elder abuse.

A study by the Government Accountability Office released at the hearing estimated 14 percent of elderly Americans experienced some form of abuse in 2009. □

HEALTH

Aruba TODAY

Stomach pacemaker could help obese lose weight



LONDON – Patrick Hetzner tried diets and exercise, just about everything short of stomach stapling to lose weight. Nothing worked. Five months ago he tried something new: a stomach pacemaker that curbed his appetite.

Since having it implanted, Hetzner, a 20-year-old Munich mailman, has knocked off more than 22 pounds from his earlier weight of 229 pounds.

Hetzner got the device as part of a clinical trial. Since being approved by Britain last month, the device is available for sale across the European Union. It works a bit like a cardiac pacemaker, and consists of a stimulator and a sensor surgically implanted onto the stomach.

The stimulator sends out electrical pulses meant to trick the stomach and brain into thinking the body is full. Hetzner said the pulses kick in a few minutes after he starts eating or drinking. He said they make him feel full after finishing about half the amount of food he would normally eat.

“It feels like a little pressure on my stomach or a tickle, but it’s not a bad feeling,” he said in a telephone interview. □

Stigma attached to burden of obesity

Obese people are already at risk for a range of health issues, but their problems can be made worse if they feel they are being discriminated against because of their weight, researchers say.

The new study included 1,500 adults, aged 25 to 74, who were surveyed in 1995 and again in 2005 as part of the National Survey of Midlife Development in the United States. Using a measurement based on height and weight called the body mass index BMI, Purdue University researchers compared the participants’ BMIs to their health and perceptions of weight discrimination.

The results are published in



the March issue of the journal Social Psychology Quarterly. “As expected, those who were obese fared worse in overall health when they were followed up with 10 years later. But we found there was a difference among those who felt they were discriminated against and those who didn’t,” study leader Markus H. Schafer, a doctoral student

US study says

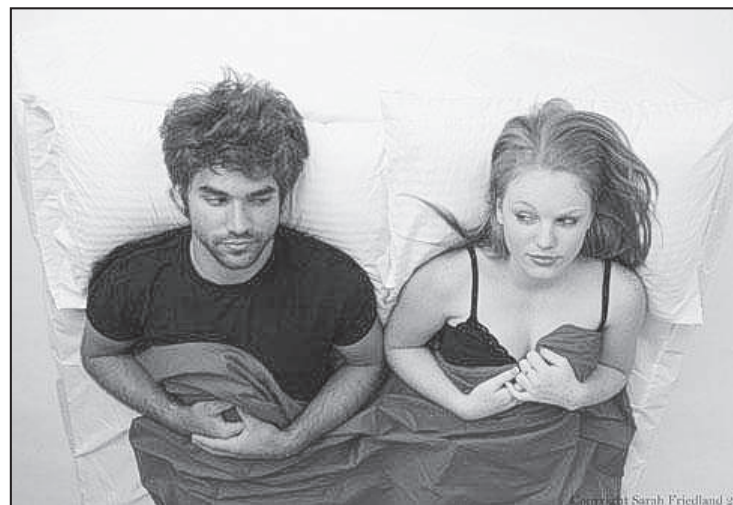
Sex down among young adults, teens

ATLANTA – Apparently, fewer teens and young adults are having sex, according to a federal study which offers numbers but doesn’t examine the reasons. Why is it decreasing? “That’s the \$100,000 question,” said Bill Albert, chief program officer for the National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy.

Some experts say an emphasis on abstinence may have played a role. Some say concern about sexually spread diseases may have been a factor perhaps instilled by parents who watched the AIDS crisis unfold. Still others suggest this is a generation of kids who are less inclined to experiment with drugs and sex than their predecessors.

The study, released is based on interviews of about 5,300 young people, ages 15 to 24. It shows the proportion in that age group who said they had had some kind of sexual contact dropped in the past decade from 78 percent to about 72 percent.

There are other surveys of sexual behavior, but this is consid-



ered the largest and most reliable. “It’s the gold standard,” Albert said.

Health scientist Anjani Chandra of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention described the decline in sex as small but significant. She declined to speculate on the reasons. It’s difficult to look

for a trend earlier than 2002 because previous surveys did not gather as much detail about various types of sex, she added.

However, data over the years on vaginal intercourse among never-married adolescents shows a steady decline since 1988. □

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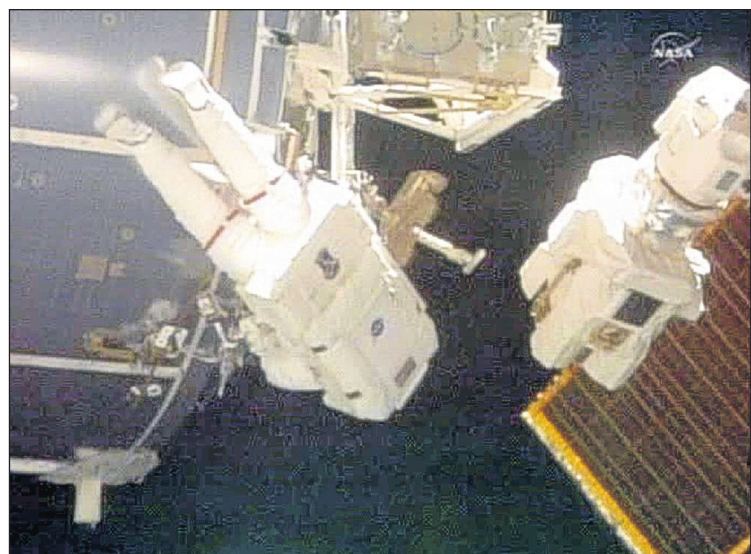
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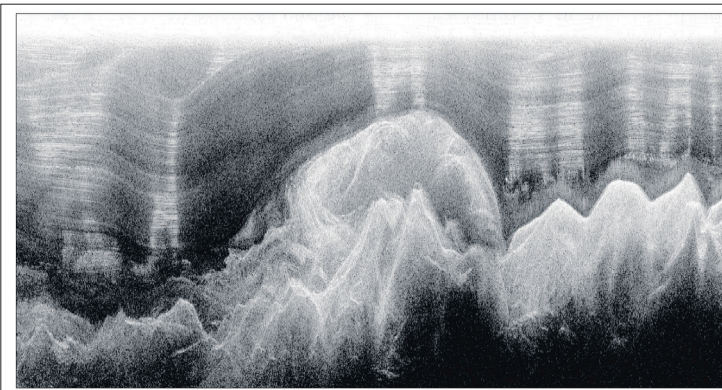


Bottoms up Antarctic ice growth discovered



Associated Press

"I tend to think more 'bittersad,' " she told an interviewer. She added: "It's just a part of history that I hope we hold on to and appreciate and that we celebrate when we get home and are walking away from her on the runway for the last time." Shuttle commander Steven Lindsey said the mission has gone "just absolutely spectacular" and he and his crew couldn't be happier. The six shuttle and six station astronauts teamed up to install a new storage room on the orbiting lab, and hooked up an equipment platform with a spare radiator. □



Associated Press

Ted Scambos, a glaciologist at the National Snow and Ice Data Center at the University of Colorado, Boulder, called the finding “totally new, at least at this scale.”

“This is orders of magnitude larger than refreezing was imagined to be, and the concept that it could uplift the ice cap is completely new,” said Scambos, who was not part of the research project. In the past, deposits of refrozen water were only seen where there are lakes under the ice, said glacier researcher Sasha Carter of the Scripps Institution of Oceanography in San Diego. □

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Papa dice a Piñera hará todo lo posible por viajar a Chile

CIUDAD DEL VATICANO (AP) - El papa Benedicto XVI dijo el jueves al presidente de Chile que “hará todos los esfuerzos posibles” para viajar al país sudamericano, luego de recibir una invitación en ese sentido del propio mandatario, Sebastián Piñera, durante una audiencia privada en el despacho papal.

“Lo invité a que visite Chile. Creo que todos los chilenos recordamos con mucho cariño y nostalgia la visita de Juan Pablo II.

El me contó que tenía 84 años, que era difícil, pero que iba a hacer sus mejores esfuerzos”, expresó el mandatario a periodistas.

El Papa recibió a Piñera en la sala del Tronetto, anexa a su biblioteca privada, con un “bienvenido” en español, a lo que Piñera le contestó: “Muchas gracias, santidad.

Para mí es un honor que me reciba”.

Ya en la biblioteca, se sentaron uno frente al otro. Benedicto XVI le preguntó si era la primera vez que venía a Roma y Piñera le dijo que era la segunda vez que se encontraba con un pontífice.

Piñera conversó a solas con el Papa durante 25 minutos en un ambiente de “cordialidad” en la biblioteca privada del pontífice, expresó el Vaticano en un comunicado.

“Afrontaron temas de común interés, como la protección de la vida humana y de la familia, la ayuda al desarrollo integral, la lucha contra la pobreza, el respeto de los derechos humanos, la justicia y la paz social”, agregó.

Piñera, por su parte, dijo que el Papa “entregó a todos los chilenos sus palabras de aliento por la lucha que estamos dando por defender la

vida, desde la concepción a la muerte natural, incluyendo al niño que está por nacer, la familia, los derechos humanos en Chile y en el mundo entero”. “Tuve la oportunidad de agradecerle por sus palabras cariñosas que nos envió a todos los chilenos con ocasión del terremoto y también del accidente de los mineros”, afirmó.

El presidente Piñera le regaló un incensario de plata, réplica del existente en la catedral de Santiago de Chile. Benedicto XVI le correspondió con la medalla en oro de su pontificado.

Tras la audiencia, Piñera se reunió con el secretario de estado Vaticano, cardenal Tarcisio Bertone y después saludó al decano del Colegio Cardenalicio, el purpurado Angelo Sodano, que fue nuncio en Chile. Piñera ofrece un almuerzo en honor de Ber-



El papa Benedicto XVI, a la derecha, posa para una fotografía con el presidente de Chile, Sebastián Piñera, durante una audiencia privada en el Vaticano, el jueves 3 de marzo de 2011. (Foto AP/Tony Gentile, pool)

Venezuela conversa con Gadafi y le pide negociar

CARACAS (AP) - El presidente Hugo Chávez conversó con el líder libio Moamar Gadafi sobre una iniciativa venezolana de crear una comisión mediadora con el propósito de alcanzar una solución pacífica a la violenta crisis que agobia ese país norafricano, confirmó el miércoles un alto funcionario de Venezuela.

El ministro de Información y Comunicación, Andrés Izarra, a través de su cuenta de la red social Twitter escribió: “Confirmamos conversación del Comandante Chávez con Kadafi (Gadafi) en el día de ayer (martes) sobre propuesta de Comisión de Paz para Libia”. Izarra no dio detalles sobre la conversación.

Chávez, que se ha negado a condenar a Gadafi y se ha referido repetidamente a él como “mi amigo”, ha expresado su oposición a cualquier decisión del Consejo de Seguridad de la ONU que abra el camino a una intervención militar en Libia, un paso que los miembros permanentes ya han descartado.

El miércoles por la mañana, el canciller venezolano Nicolás Maduro manifestó que la creación de un bloque de países amigos puede ayudar a resolver el conflicto en Libia, y afirmó que la diplomacia, en lugar de las

amenazas militares, debe ser utilizada para poner fin a la violencia en ese país.

“Ojalá los próximos días pudiéramos tener conformada una comisión de países amigos, que vaya a hablar tanto con el gobierno del coronel Gadafi, como con la oposición que ha estado en armas en algunas regiones, que lleguen a un acuerdo al camino a la paz”, dijo Maduro, citado por la agencia estatal de noticias AVN.

Maduro además criticó a funcionarios de Estados Unidos y la Unión Europea por la adopción de políticas dirigidas a aislar a Gadafi y la posibilidad de prestar apoyo militar a los manifestantes antigubernamentales.

El canciller expresó que en el escenario internacional “se impone una diplomacia que más bien apunta a darle alas al imperio para una invasión contra el pueblo de Libia”.

Chávez recientemente hizo un llamado a la comunidad mundial a que “no nos dejemos llevar por los tambores de la guerra”, a que se busque una “fórmula política” y se envíe “una comisión de buena voluntad que vaya a tratar de ayudar a que no se sigan matando en Libia”. □

tone y visitará la basílica de San Pedro del Vaticano y las Grutas Vaticanas, donde se encuentra la tumba de Juan Pablo II, que será beatificado el próximo 1 de mayo. □

Ecuador revisará seguridad fronteriza con Perú

QUITO (AP) - Ecuador propondrá a Perú en una reunión de funcionarios programada para el jueves combatir al narcotráfico, contrabando, tráfico de armas y de personas en la frontera común, informó el ministro de Defensa.

El ministro Javier Ponce destacó que esos Ecuador planteará “avanzar hacia la integración de una Comisión Binacional de Frontera, similar a la que se mantiene con Colombia, a fin de combatir fuertemente el narcotráfico”. El encuentro binacional será inaugurado por los cancilleres Ricardo Patiño de Ecuador y José García Belaúnde de Perú. Ponce aseveró que también se abordarán asuntos relacionados al contrabando de combustibles, armas y personas así como avanzar en las tareas de desminado, entre otros.

Perú y Ecuador firmaron en 1998 un acuerdo de paz que puso fin a 50 años de conflictos fronterizos que llevó a tres enfrentamientos bélicos, el último de los cuales ocurrió en 1995. □

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